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THE

UNIVERSAL RESTORATION,

EXHIBITED IN

FOUR DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

A MINISTER AND HIS FRIEND,

COMPREHENDING

The Subſtance of ſeveral real Converſations which the Author hath had with various Perſons, both in America and Europe,

ON THAT INTERESTING SUBJECT,

CHIEFLY DESIGNED

Fully to ſtate, and fairly to anſwer the moſt common Objections that are brought againſt it from

THE SCRIPTURES.

THE SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

BY ELHANAN WINCHESTER.

To this Edition is prefixed,

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE MEANS AND MANNER OF THE AUTHOR'S EMBRACING THESE SENTIMENTS,

Intermixed with ſome

SKETCHES OF HIS LIFE

DURING FOUR YEARS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

(BY T. GILLET, NO. 19, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE,)

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J. Parſons, No. 21, Paternoſter-Row, and
W. Stewart, Piccadilly.

M,DCC,XCII.

[*Entered at Stationer's Hall.*]

PRICE FOUR SHILLINGS, IN BOARDS.

FROM THE

CRITICAL REVIEW,

For September, 1788.

"OUR Author, with great candour and extenſive know-
" ledge of the ſubject, diſcuſſes the doctrine of eternal puniſh-
" ments. He thinks that there will be a period when every
" ſinner will be reſtored to the Divine favour. This doctrine is
" perfectly conſiſtent with the benevolence of the Deity. It is
" ſupported by many wiſe and good men; nor is there any rea-
" ſon to ſuppoſe that it will be perverted to ſerve the purpoſes
" of vice and immorality. Mr. Wincheſter, in his defence of
" it, ſhews much charity, much humanity, and no little ſhare of
" learning. The fifth Dialogue alone, which relates to the de-
" ſign and tendency of puniſhment, might furniſh ſome little
" foundation for a difference of opinion; but, in a queſtion ſo
" greatly above human attainment, the mind would be loſt in
" the enquiry, and not greatly benefited by the diſcuſſion. The
" queſtion of the univerſal Reſtoration, muſt be examined as
" Mr. Wincheſter has done, by the word of God, as revealed
" at different times, and particularly in the Goſpel."

N. B. A conſiderable part of the fifth Dialogue, being printed in the Lectures on the Prophecies, is left out of this edition, and the remaining part is included in the fourth Dialogue.

BX
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W72u
1792

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is known to many that Mr. William Bicknell, late of Blackman-Street in the Borough of Southwark, but now of Ponder's End, Middlesex, purchased the copy-right of this work, which was entered accordingly as his property at Stationer's Hall, three parts of which he afterwards sold to three other respectable gentlemen of London, who have all since resigned their rights to the Author. Mr. Bicknell first gave up his part, by an instrument of writing under his own hand, which is as follows:

Ponder's End, Middlesex.

" I HEREBY resign all my share and title to the copy-right of a work, intitled, " Uni- " versal Restoration, exhibited in Dialogues, be- " tween a Minister and his Friend, by Elhanan " Winchester," to the said Elhanan Winchester, together with the emoluments and advantages that may arise as well from the copies now on sale, as as from any future edition of the same, so far as my said right extends; being one fourth share thereof; as witness my hand, this 24th day of November, 1789.

William Bicknell.

Rev. Elhanan Winchester.

This Resignation was accompanied with the following Letter.

DEAR

550151

DEAR SIR,

WITH pleasure I resign for your benefit, a work which has afforded me more comfort and satisfaction than any yet published, only excepting that *Mine* from whence it originated. I never expect to see it surpassed, except by the Lectures, in our Language. And I think it will stand, with the Lectures, as a record to succeeding ages, of the additional light that it has pleased our gracious Benefactor to bestow in these days through your instrumentality.

Farewel, and enjoy the fruit of your labours. And may God of his infinite mercy, so water the good seed that has been sown in this land by your means, that it may bring forth a plentiful harvest in our lives and practice, is the daily prayer of your friend in the real Gospel,

W. BICKNELL.

PREFACE.

TO THE READER.

AS I now preſent my Friends and the Public with a new edition of the Dialogues on the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, which by many has been long deſired, perhaps it may be acceptable to ſome for me to give a brief account how I came firſt to the knowledge of this part of the counſel of God, which I have not ſhunned freely to declare, both by word and writing, as I have found opportunity and neceſſity.

I think it was in the beginning of the year 1778, being in SOUTH CAROLINA, upon the River *Pee Dee*, where I was at that time Miniſter, that I called to ſee a friend, who firſt put into my hands that valuable book written by *Paul Siegvolk*, and which is called *The Everlaſting Goſpel*, of which I have lately publiſhed a new edition. I was deſired to tell what it meant to hold forth, as my friend could not tell by any means what to make of it on the account of the ſingularity and ſtrangeneſs of the ſentiments therein contained; although the language is very plain and clear, and by no means dark, myſtical, or obſcure.

I opened the book as I was deſired, and dipping into it here and there, for half an hour

perhaps, was very ſoon able to tell what the Author aimed at, viz. *that there would be a final end of ſin and miſery, and that all fallen creatures would be reſtored, by Jeſus Chriſt, to a ſtate of holineſs and happineſs, after ſuch as were rebellious had ſuffered in proportion to their crimes.* I had never ſeen any thing of the ſort before in all my life; and I ſeemed ſtruck with ſeveral ideas that I glanced over, ſuch as the inconſiſtency and impoſſibility of both good and evil always exiſting in the univerſe; and eſpecially his obſervations upon the word *eternal* or *everlaſting*, ſhewing that it was uſed for what never had a beginning, and would never have an end, as the being and perfections of God; and that it was alſo applied to things which had a beginning, but ſhould never have an end, as the being and happineſs of the righteous; and, that it was alſo frequently uſed to expreſs things, times, and ſeaſons which had both beginning and end, which he therefore called *periodical eternities*, and gave a great number of inſtances of this ſort, which could not be denied; and he contended that the *everlaſting puniſhment* threatened to the wicked, did not belong to the firſt, nor to the ſecond, but to the third claſs of theſe durations.

But as I was only deſired to tell what the author meant, when I had ſatisfied my friend in that reſpect, I laid the book down, and I believe, we both concluded it to be a pleaſant ingenious hypotheſis, but had no ſerious thoughts of its being true; and for my part, I deter-

I determined not to trouble myſelf about it, or to think any thing more of the matter. And as the book had been ſent a conſiderable diſtance for my friend to read, I ſuppoſe it was ſoon after ſent back; for I ſaw it no more, nor heard any thing farther about it. The following ſummer I went a journey into VIRGINIA, and happening to mention the ſubject to a miniſter there, he told me that a few years before, it had been a ſubject of controverſy in the public papers, between a clergyman, who defended, and a gentleman of the law, who denied the proper *endleſs* eternity of puniſhment; and he told me that this gentleman who denied it, had advanced, that the tranſlators of the Bible had rendered the very ſame Greek word, by very different Engliſh words, ſometimes rendering it *for ever*, and ſometimes *world*; and that if they had always uniformly rendered it by one Engliſh word, it would have been evident to all readers, that no argument for *endleſs miſery*, could have been drawn therefrom. I was told alſo while I was in VIRGINIA, that a clergyman of the epiſcopal church, had a few years before, given out that he had ſome wonderful thing to make known to his hearers, which he would preach upon ſome Sunday, but did not mention when. This raiſed the public curioſity, and great numbers attended his place of worſhip in hopes of hearing what this wonderful thing might be; but for a conſiderable time the matter was undiſcovered. But at laſt he gave out, that on the next Sunday he

would open this great ſecret. Vaſt numbers of people flocked to hear what it could be; When he came to declare what it was, behold! it was a wonderful piece of news indeed, ſuch as had never been heard before in any pulpit in VIRGINIA. It was nothing ſhort of the doctrine of the *Reſtoration.* I think, to the beſt of my remembrance, they told me, that he opened and enlarged upon it for two Sundays, and never preached any more, being immediately after ſeized with ſickneſs, which terminated in his death. And this was generally eſteemed as a judgment that fell upon him for daring to preach ſuch a wicked, falſe and dangerous opinion; and that God cut him off from the land of the living, to teſtify his diſpleaſure againſt him; and to terrify others from daring to follow his example, or believe his ſentiments. But perhaps this might have been ſome worthy, learned, pious man, who had long concealed this grand truth in his heart, and had derived much ſatisfaction therefrom, and longed to proclaim it to others, for their good. And at laſt, notwithſtanding the oppoſition that he might expect, reſolved ſo to do; and accordingly was enabled, juſt before his time came to depart out of this world, to bear a faithful teſtimony to this moſt grand and important of all God's purpoſes. And having performed his duty, his maſter called him to receive his reward, and gave him the glorious plaudit of, "Well done, thou "good and faithful ſervant;—enter thou "into the joy of thy Lord."

As

As for the vain judgments of men they are not to be regarded. "For they know not the "thoughts of the Lord, neither underſtand "they his counſel." "But the ſouls of the "righteous are in the hand of God, and there "ſhall no torment touch them. In the ſight "of the unwiſe they ſeemed to die; and their "departure is taken for miſery. And their "going from us to be utter deſtruction; but "they are in peace. For though they be "puniſhed in the ſight of men, yet is their "hope full of immortality. And having "been a little chaſtiſed, they ſhall be greatly "rewarded; for God proved them, and found "them worthy for himſelf. As gold in the "furnace hath he tried them, and hath received "them as a burnt offering. And in the time "of their viſitation, they ſhall ſhine, and run "to and fro, like ſparks among the ſtubble. "They ſhall judge the nations, and have do-"minion over the people, and their Lord "ſhall reign for ever. They that put their "truſt in him ſhall underſtand the truth; and "ſuch as be faithful in love ſhall abide with "him: for grace and mercy is to his ſaints, "and he hath care for his elect." "But "though the righteous be prevented with "death, yet ſhall he be in reſt."

I am apt to think therefore, that this miniſter was one of uncommon faith and love, and as he believed God, ſo he loved mankind, and wiſhed them to know the amazing riches of their Redeemer's love towards them: and

when

when he had openly delivered this teſtimony, he was called to his reſt.

Indeed if the enemies of this doctrine had been true prophets, I ſhould have died and gone to hell long ago; for no ſooner was it known that I had embraced it, but ſome gave out that I would not live a year; but I have already lived eleven. One of my old friends deſired me to take particular notice of what he ſaid, which he expreſſed in theſe words, "Mind what I tell you. In ſix months from "this time, you will turn Deiſt, and deny "all revealed religion: and in twelve months "you will turn Atheiſt, deny the being of "God, and abandon yourſelf to all kinds of "open wickedneſs." Bleſſed be God, this has alſo proved falſe. And they generally ſeemed to agree to propheſy certain damnation to me whenever I ſhould depart out of this world. But I truſt this is equally falſe, "For I know whom I have believed, (or truſted) "and am perſuaded that he is able to "keep that which I have committed unto "him againſt that day."

But to return to my narrative,

Sometime after I returned back to SOUTH CAROLINA, a Phyſician with whom I had been acquainted in VIRGINIA, came to live in the pariſh where I was miniſter; and among his books I found *the Everlaſting Goſpel*, by *Paul Siegvolk*; this was the ſecond copy that had fell in my way, and I read a little more therein, but as yet had not the leaſt thought that ever I ſhould embrace his ſentiments; yet

yet ſome of his arguments appeared very concluſive, and I could not wholly ſhake them off, but I concluded to let them alone, and not inveſtigate the matter; and therefore I never gave the book even ſo much as one curſory reading, till with great difficulty I procured one in the city of Philadelphia, more than two years afterwards.

In the year 1779, I found myſelf much ſtirred up to exhort my fellow creatures to repent, believe, and obey the Goſpel, and began to adopt a more open and general method of preaching than I had uſed for ſome years before; having been deemed one of the moſt conſiſtent Calviniſts upon the continent, much upon the plan of Dr. Gill, whom I eſteemed almoſt as an oracle. But now my heart being opened, and viewing the worth of ſouls, I felt great compaſſion towards them, and invited them with all my might to fly for mercy to the arms of Chriſt, who died for them, and who was willing to ſave them. I was gradually led into this way of preaching, without conſidering any thing about its conſiſtency with ſtrict calviniſm, but finding myſelf very happy and comfortable in my own mind, and that this method of preaching was highly uſeful, I continued to go on in the ſame courſe.

About this time I began to find uncommon deſires for the converſion and ſalvation of the poor negroes, who were very numerous in that part of the country; but whom none of my predeceſſors, that I could learn, had ever taken

taken pains to inſtruct in the principles of Chriſtianity; neither had any ſingle ſlave, either man, or woman been baptized until that ſummer, in the whole pariſh (which was very large) that I ever heard of.

The prejudices which the ſlaves had againſt Chriſtianity, on account of the ſeverities practiſed upon them by profeſſing Chriſtians, both miniſters and people, might be one principal reaſon why they could not be brought to attend to religious inſtructions. But they had no prejudice againſt me on that ſcore, as I never had any thing to do with ſlavery, but on the contrary condemned it; and this being pretty generally known, operated ſo upon the minds of thoſe poor creatures, that they ſhewed a diſpoſition to attend my miniſtry, more than they had ever ſhewed to any other. But ſtill I never had addreſſed them in particular, and indeed had hardly any hopes of doing them good. But one evening ſeeing a great number of them at the door of the houſe where I was preaching, I found myſelf conſtrained as it were, to go to the door, and tell them, That Jeſus Chriſt loved them, and died for them, as well as for us white people, and that they might come and believe in him, and welcome. And I gave them as warm and preſſing an invitation as I could, to comply with the glorious goſpel. This ſhort diſcourſe addreſſed immediately to them, took greater effect than can be well imagined. There were about thirty from one plantation in the neighbourhood preſent; (beſides others) theſe

these returned home, and did not even give sleep to their eyes, as they afterwards informed me, until they had settled every quarrel among themselves, and according to their form of marriage, had married every man to the woman with whom he lived; had restored whatever one had unjustly taken from another; and determined from that time to seek the Lord diligently. From that very evening they began constantly to pray to the Lord, and so continued; and he was found of them. I continued to instruct them, and within three months from the first of June, I baptized more than thirty blacks belonging to that plantation, besides as many others, as in the whole made up one hundred, of which sixty-three were men, and thirty-seven were women, all which were born in AFRICA, or immediately descended from such as were natives of that unhappy country.

My preaching was not only useful to the poor slaves, but also to great numbers of the white people, of whom I baptized upon profession of repentance and faith in Christ, about one hundred and thirty nine persons within the same space. This was a summer of great success, and I shall remember that happy season with pleasure while I live. This summer I received some farther dawnings of the day of the general Restoration in my mind, for upon considering several Scriptures, such as these, "He shall see of the travail of his "soul, and shall be satisfied; by his know-"ledge shall my righteous servant justify

" many; for he ſhall bear their iniquities," Iſai. liii. 11. " After this I beheld, and lo, " a great multitude, which no man could " number, of all nations, and kindreds, and " peoples, and tongues, ſtood before the " throne, and before the Lamb, clothed " with white robes, and palms in their " hands" Rev. vii. 9. I became fully perſuaded that the number of the finally ſaved would equal, if not exceed the number of the loſt. And I was ſo forcibly impreſſed with this new and very joyful diſcovery, that I not only converſed in that ſtrain privately, but boldly preached it in the congregation, which generally conſiſted of nearly a thouſand perſons upon Sundays. Some of the people to whom I had mentioned ſomething reſpecting the ſentiment, thought that I was going at once to declare myſelf in favour of the GENERAL RESTORATION. But that was as yet far from being the caſe; though ſome of the arguments which I had glanced upon in that book, *the Everlaſting Goſpel*, would frequently preſent themſelves to my mind in ſuch a forcible manner that I could ſcarcely withſtand their evidence.

In the month of September I left SOUTH CAROLINA, on a viſit to my friends in NEW ENGLAND, intending howevor to return to my people again; but to prevent their being left deſtitute, I procured the REV. MR. BOTSFORD to come and ſupply them, upon this condition, that whenever I ſhould return, he ſhould

ſhould reſign the congregation to me again, if I required it. But he has remained the conſtant Paſtor ever ſince. I then travelled ſlowly through the continent, preaching to the people, and converſing with my friends, to whom ſometimes in private I propoſed ſome of the arguments in favour of the GENERAL RESTORATION, which I had read in the *Everlaſting Goſpel*, on purpoſe to ſee what anſwers they could give; and this I did eſpecially to able miniſters; but to my ſurpriſe often found them quite at a ſtand, not knowing what to ſay. And ſome were almoſt overpowered, with even the weak manner in which I was capable of holding forth the arguments in favour of the RESTORATION. And oftentimes the anſwers that ſome of the greateſt men gave, were ſuch as tended to increaſe my doubts reſpecting *endleſs miſery*, rather than to remove them. I remember once, that I aſked the REV. MR. MANNING, Preſident of RHODE ISLAND College, and who was at that time one of my deareſt friends, what was the ſtrongeſt argument that he could uſe in favour of the doctrine of endleſs miſery? He anſwered, That it was the nature of God, to lay the greateſt poſſible reſtraint upon ſin, and therefore he had threatened it with *endleſs puniſhment*, as the higheſt reſtraint he could poſſibly lay upon it. This argument is anſwered in the third Dialogue. Thus after much ſeeking I could find no ſatisfaction in the matter; but ſtill my doubts increaſed. Notwithſtanding, I withſtood the doctrine of

the RESTORATION with all my might, and ſometimes preached publicly againſt it with all the force I could muſter. Yet there was ſomething in its favour that gained gradually upon my mind, and ſometimes brought me to be almoſt willing to embrace it. I plainly ſaw that it would reconcile almoſt, if not quite, all the difficulties of other ſyſtems; and I thought if I ſhould ever receive it, I ſhould be able to preach much eaſier, and more freely than ever, and with far greater ſatisfaction, which by experience, I have ſince found to be true. The ideas were ſometimes ſo tranſporting to me, even while I profeſſed to oppoſe the ſentiment, that I have been conſtrained to ſet them forth in the moſt ſublime manner that I was able; and ſometimes ſo as actually to bring them who heard me converſe upon the ſubject to believe and rejoice in the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, while I thought myſelf an oppoſer of it, and only propoſed the arguments in its favour to ſee what effect they would have on ſuch who never heard them before. And I was often carried away before I was aware, even while I intended only to let my friends hear what might be ſaid. I remember once, while I was at my father's table in the year 1780, that I mentioned the doctrine of the RESTORATION, and finding that none in company had ever ſo much as heard of ſuch a ſcheme, I began to hold it forth, produced many arguments in its favour, brought up many objections, anſwered them in ſuch a manner as aſtoniſhed all preſent, and

I was

I was amazed at myſelf, I ſpoke with ſo much eaſe and readineſs as I had hardly ever experienced before on any occaſion. Nay, I was ſo much animated with the ſubject that I ſaid, That I did not doubt but that in ſixty years time, that very doctrine would univerſally be preached, and generally embraced in that very country, and would certainly prevail over all oppoſition.

This diſcourſe made a greater impreſſion upon the minds of thoſe who heard it, and upon my own alſo, than I intended; and though I afterwards uſed the beſt arguments I could in favour of the common opinion, yet I found them inſufficient wholly to remove the effects of what I had before ſaid.

After ſpending about twelve months in the moſt delightful manner, conſtantly journeying and preaching with great ſucceſs, to vaſt multitudes of people in my native country, I ſet off with intention to return towards SOUTH CAROLINA. On the way I tarried ſome time at the houſe of the Rev. Mr. SAMUEL WALDO, in *Pawling's Precinct*, State of NEW YORK, whoſe kind and friendly behaviour towards me I remember with pleaſure, and mention with gratitude. I had a great deal of very agreeable converſation with him upon the matter, and he did not ſeem to oppoſe the ideas hardly at all; but only gently cautioned me againſt receiving any thing erroneous. He is a man of a moſt excellent ſpirit, and his family was upon the whole the moſt delightful, agreeable, and happy family that I ever

ever knew. While I was at his houſe one of his children, then about twenty years of age, ſeemed fully convinced of the truth of the doctrine, by liſtening to our converſation, and was filled with great joy at the idea. Several religious men who were on a journey, lodged at the houſe while I was there, got a hint of the matter, and wiſhed to hear all that I could ſay in defence of it; I accordingly gave them ſome of the principal arguments in its favour, and obviated ſome of the moſt capital objections that could be brought againſt it; and I afterwards overheard them wiſhing that they had not been ſo curious as to have enquired ſo far into the ſubject, for they could not reſiſt the arguments, although they ſeemed reſolved to treat the ſentiment as an error.

In this ſtate of mind, half a convert to the doctrine of the RESTORATION, I arrived in the city of PHILADELPHIA, on the 7th of October, 1780. I intended to have left the city in a few days, and to have gone on towards SOUTH CAROLINA, but the Baptiſt church being deſtitute of a miniſter, they invited me to ſtop and preach with them, to which I was at length perſuaded, and for ſome time I was much followed, and there were great additions to the church. The congregations increaſed in ſuch a manner, eſpecially on Sunday-evenings, that our place of worſhip, though large, would by no means contain them; at length leave was aſked by ſome of my friends for me to preach in the church of St. Paul, in that city, which was granted.

granted. This was one of the largeſt houſes of worſhip in PHILADELPHIA, and equal in bigneſs to moſt of the churches in LONDON. I think I preached there about eighteen ſermons, and generally to verycrowded audiences, frequently more than could poſſibly get into the houſe; moſt of the clergy, of every denomination in the city, heard me there, and many thouſands of different people. I am inclined to think, that I never preached to ſo many before nor ſince as I did ſometimes in that houſe, and with almoſt univerſal approbation. But now the time of my trouble and caſting down came on, and thus it was.

Soon after I arrived in the city I had enquired of ſome friend for *The Everlaſting Goſpel*, which I could not light of for ſome time, but they lent me Mr. *Stonehouſe's* book upon the *Reſtitution of all Things*, which I had never ſeen nor heard of before; this very learned work I read with great care, and his reaſoning, arguments, and ſcripture-proofs ſeemed to me entirely ſatisfactory.

The friends who procured me the works of Mr. *Stonehouſe*, were concerned at my having an inclination to read any thing upon ſuch a ſubject; nevertheleſs, though there were ſeveral of them with whom I converſed pretty freely upon the matter, and who knew of my reading Mr. *Stonehouſe's* works, yet they behaved in ſo friendly a manner towards me, that they never mentioned a word of it to any, until by other means it come to be known and talked of.

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In the houſe where I lodged, when I firſt came to the city I had, in the freedom of converſation, and with ſome appearance of joy, expreſſed myſelf in general terms upon the ſubject, but always in the exact words of Scripture, or in ſuch a manner as this, viz. That I could not help hoping that God would finally bring *every knee to bow*, and *every tongue* to *ſwear*: and that *at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth*; *and things under the earth*; *and that every tongue* ſhould *confeſs* JESUS CHRIST to be *Lord to the glory of God the Father*. And that I hoped, *that in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one all things in* CHRIST, *both which are in heaven, and which are on earth*, &c.

Such paſſages as theſe I mentioned in this manner, hoping that they would be fulfilled. The people of the houſe ſeemed ſurpriſed, and aſked me if I believed ſo: I anſwered, "That ſometimes I could not help hoping that it might be ſo." I could hardly have imagined among friends, that any danger could have ariſen from my expreſſing a hope that the Scriptures were true.

However theſe falſe friends told a miniſter, whom for a number of years I had eſteemed as my beſt and moſt intimate friend, that I was turned heretic, and believed the doctrine of the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, and deſired him to convince me. Some time after he met with me in the ſtreet, and in a very abrupt manner told me, that he had wanted

to

to see me for some time, that he might give me a piece of his mind; that he had been informed by such a person, that I was inclined to the doctrine of the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, and then, instead of using any argument to convince me, or taking any method for my recovery, added this *laconic* speech, "If you embrace this sentiment, I shall no "longer own you for a brother." And he has hitherto been as good as his word, having never written nor spoken to me from that day to this; and when I have since offered to shake hands with him, he has refused; and yet he was one whom I esteemed above any other on earth, as a hearty, sincere, long tried, and faithful friend. If my intimate friend treated me in such a manner, what had I not to expect from my open and avowed enemies?

I now foresaw the storm, and I determined to prepare for it, not by denying what I had said, but by examining and determining for myself, whether the sentiment was according to Scripture or not. If I found that it was not, I was determined to retract, but if it was, to hold it fast, let the consequences be what they might. I had now no time to lose, I expected in a short time to be called to an account, and examined respecting this doctrine, and obliged either to *defend* or *deny* it; I was already too well persuaded that it was true, to do the latter without hesitation, and yet not sufficiently for the former. For this purpose, I shut myself up chiefly in my chamber, read

the Scriptures, and prayed to God to lead me into all truth, and not ſuffer me to embrace any error; and I think that with an upright mind, I laid myſelf open to believe whatever the Lord had revealed. It would be too long to tell all the teachings I had on this head; let it ſuffice, in ſhort, to ſay, That I became ſo well perſuaded of the truth of the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, that I was determined never to deny it, let it coſt me ever ſo much, though all my numerous friends ſhould forſake me, as I expected they would, and though I ſhould be driven from men, and obliged to dwell in caves or dens of the earth, and feed on wild roots and vegetables, and ſuffer the loſs of all things, friends, wealth, fame, health, character, and even life itſelf. The truth appeared to me more valuable than all things, and as I had found it, I was determined never to part with it, let what would be offered in exchange.

I had now formed my reſolution, and was determined how to act when the trial came. Hitherto I had ſaid nothing about the RESTORATION in public, and but little in private; but I preached up the death of Chriſt, and ſalvation for mankind through him, without reſtriction. This free manner of preaching gave offence to ſome, who came to hear me no more. On the evening of the 22d of January 1781, a number of the members of the church, who had heard that I held the doctrine of the RESTORATION, met me at a friend's houſe, to aſk me the queſtion, Whether

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I did or not? I acknowledged that I did, but did not wiſh to trouble any body with my ſentiments. They deſired me neither to preach them in public, nor to converſe of them in private. I told them, That if they would prevent people from aſking me, I would ſay nothing upon the matter; but if people aſked me concerning my ſentiments, I could not deny them, and if they wiſhed to know the reaſons, I muſt inform them. And thus the matter was to reſt; but ſome that were preſent, wiſhed to know the foundation of my ſentiments, others oppoſed it, not wiſhing to hear any thing in its favour. At length it was agreed that I might read the paſſages of Scripture upon which I judged the doctrine of the RESTORATION to be founded, but muſt not add a ſingle word of explanation on my part, and on their parts they were not to aſk any queſtions, or make the leaſt oppoſition, for if they did, I inſiſted upon the liberty of defending.

Accordingly I took the Bible, and read many paſſages in the Old and New Teſtaments, which I judged to contain the doctrine; and the very reading of them convinced ſeveral of the company of the truth of the RESTORATION. There was nothing farther took place at that time: we parted with a mutual agreement; I was not to preach it in the pulpit, nor to introduce it in converſation, but I would not be obliged to deny it, when aſked, nor to refuſe to vindicate it, if oppoſed: and on their parts they were not to

ſpeak of it to my prejudice, but to endeavour as much as poſſible, to keep the matter cloſe, and ſo we parted. But notwithſtanding all the pains that could be taken, the matter got abroad, and ſeveral came to diſcourſe with me on my principles, to whom I gave ſuch reaſons as I was able for what I believed. A little after this time, I met with another copy of the *Everlaſting Goſpel*, which I then read through with attention for the firſt time, and found much ſatisfaction; the arguments and Scripture proofs therein contained, ſeemed to me ſufficient to convince all that would read with candour and attention.

I ſtill continued to act only on the defenſive, not preaching upon the ſubject, nor going about to private houſes to make intereſt in my favour; but if any came to me and wiſhed me to diſcourſe upon it, I would not refuſe; and thus a number were convinced of its truth, while others violently oppoſed it. And thus matters continued until the latter end of March. Having heard that the German Baptiſts in *Germantown*, about eight miles from *Philadelphia* held the doctrine of the RESTORATION, I had appointed to ſpend the firſt Sunday in April with them; and this engagement had been made ſometime. Juſt as I was ready to go out of the city on Saturday, I found that ſome of the members of the Church had privately ſent into the country, and collected a number of the ableſt miniſters, who were arrived in the city on purpoſe to debate with me, and to confute me publicly.

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I gave them the liberty of my pulpit as they pleaſed for the next day, and went out of the city to go to *Germantown*; and took that opportunity to go and viſit that ancient, venerable, and excellent man, Dr. GEORGE DE BENNEVILLE, who received me in the moſt kind, open, and friendly manner; and his converſation was moſt highly edifying to me. Afterwards I went to *Germantown*, and lodged there all night, ready to preach the next day. As ſoon as my enemies in *Philadelphia* found that I was gone out of the city, they ſpread a report that I had fled to avoid an interview with theſe miniſters, who had come on purpoſe to convince me. Nothing could have been more falſe, than ſuch a report, for I had been engaged to go to *Germantown*, on that day, for ſeveral weeks beforehand: I knew nothing of theſe Miniſters being ſent for until they came to town; and I had no fear but I ſhould be able, by God's aſſiſtance, to defend the cauſe before them; and beſides, I had appointed to return on Monday, and did return accordingly. The whole Church met, both my friends and my oppoſers, and theſe Miniſters met with them. I was called to attend a funeral at the time, and was at the houſe of mourning, when a meſſenger was ſent in haſte, to deſire my immediate attendance at the meeting without any delay. I found that thoſe who were my enemies in the aſſembly, had been greatly vaunting over my friends, becauſe I was not preſent. They ſaid I had abſconded merely to avoid a debate,

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in which I was ſure to be confuted, as here was an opportunity that might never preſent itſelf again; and ſeven wiſe, able, and learned Miniſters had aſſembled on purpoſe to diſpute with me, but that I had gone, and left my adherents in the lurch, from a conſciouſneſs that I was not able to defend my cauſe; with abundance more to the ſame purpoſe. My friends, on the other hand, told them, That I was afraid of nothing but ſin, and that they doubted not of my being able and willing to diſpute with any one of the gentlemen, or all of them, one by one, if they choſe it. O, no; they replied, they knew better than that, I was gone out of the way on purpoſe, where I could not be found. My friends told them, That if there was a vote paſt in the aſſembly that I ſhould diſpute with any one, they would engage that I would be among them in a few minutes. It was accordingly unanimouſly voted, that I ſhould diſpute with the *Rev. Mr. Boggs*, upon my ſentiments, in the preſence of theſe Miniſters, and of the whole aſſembly. But when in a few minutes I came in, and took my place, what different countenances appeared in the congregation? All my friends were highly pleaſed, and the others were as much confounded and diſappointed, at ſeeing me come in ſo chearfully and quickly, after they had made themſelves ſo ſure, that I would not come. But ſurely, I might have been looked upon with pity; alone to anſwer for myſelf, no one to ſupport me; while my antagoniſts were ſeven of the ableſt

ableſt Miniſters that could be obtained. I felt, however, that inward compoſure, from a conſciouſneſs of having acted uprightly and ſincerely in the whole affair, that even cauſed my countenance to appear eaſy and chearful.

The vote was then publicly read, and I ſtood up, and declared my readineſs to comply with what was required. The worthy gentleman who was choſen to diſpute with me, then roſe up, and ſaid theſe words, "I am "not prepared to diſpute with *Mr. Win-* "*cheſter*, I have heard that he ſays, That "it would take ſix weeks to canvaſs all the "arguments fairly on both ſides; and I ſup- "poſe he has been ſtudying upon the ſubject "for a week or more, and I have not ſtudied "it at all; and therefore I muſt beg to be "excuſed."

When I found that he, and all the reſt wholly declined diſputing with me, I begged liberty to ſpeak for two hours upon my ſentiments, and lay them fairly open, and the ground upon which I maintained them. But this was denied me; I then deſired them to give me one hour for this purpoſe; but this was alſo refuſed. One of the Miniſters got up, and ſaid, That their buſineſs was not to debate with me, but to aſk me, whether I believed the RESTORATION of bad men and angels, finally to a ſtate of holineſs and happineſs, &c.

But if they did not come to diſpute with me, why was the vote paſſed by their party, as well as by my friends, that I ſhould diſ-

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pute with them? This speaks for itself. The ministers insisted upon putting the question to me, Do you believe the doctrine of the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION? My friends objected to my answering the question, unless I might be allowed to vindicate my sentiments. But I said, That I did not fear any use that could be made of my words; that I had always freely confessed what my thoughts were, when asked; and therefore I told them, that I did heartily believe the GENERAL RESTORATION, and was willing to defend it. The gentleman that was chosen to dispute with me, then asked me, whether I thought it strange, considering my change of sentiments, that there should be such a noise and uproar made upon the occasion? &c. I told him, That I did not think it strange at all; and gave him a little history of the affair, and how the matter came abroad, through the treachery of some whom I had esteemed as my friends; that when I mentioned it to them I was not fully persuaded of it myself, and perhaps never might have been, if I had not been opposed and threatened; that I never had intended to trouble the people with my sentiments, but was willing to live and die with them, if they could bear with me; but that I could not use so much deceit, as to deny what I believed, when asked by any one; that I never had yet done so, and by the grace of God never would, let the consequences be what they might. What I said was in the presence of all my accusers, and none of them could

could contradict me, nor had aught to lay to my charge, except in this matter of the Gospel of my Saviour. My discourse took such an effect upon him, that he then publicly declared, that my behaviour in the whole affair had been as became a *man* and a *christian*, and that no one could accuse me of any improper conduct. I stood sometime, and as none appeared to have any thing farther to say to me, I took my leave, and went out. He accompanied me to the door, and told me that he would write to me upon the subject; but whatever was the reason, he never did, nor have we spoken together since.

The Ministers then advised the people to get another Minister; but my friends being numerous, insisted it should be fairly determined by the subscribers at large; but this the other party would not agree to. Several very fair offers were made by my friends to them, but they refused them all; and finally, by force they kept us out of the house, and deprived us of our part of the property, which was at last confirmed to them by law, though I think unjustly, as we were the majority at first; but they took uncommon pains in carrying about a *protest* against me, to every member of the church, both in the city and in the country, and threatening all with excommunication who would not sign it; by which some were intimidated, and by these and other means they strengthened their party. But on the other hand, I took no pains, either to proselyte people to believe

my ſentiments or to make my party ſtrong. But I believe near an hundred of the members ſuffered themſelves to be excommunicated rather than to ſign the *proteſt* againſt me, and the doctrine that I preached. When we were deprived of our houſe of worſhip, the *truſtees* of the *Univerſity* gave us the liberty of their hall, where we quietly worſhipped God for about four years, until we purchaſed a place for ourſelves. But to return. After this meeting of the Miniſters, the whole affair was open, and I found myſelf obliged to vindicate the doctrine which they had condemned unheard, not only in private, but in the pulpit. Accordingly, on the 22d day of April, I preached a ſermon on Gen. iii. 15. in which I openly aſſerted the doctrine of the FINAL and UNIVERSAL RESTORATION of all fallen intelligences. This was publiſhed by particular deſire, with a liſt of the plaineſt Scripture paſſages in favour of the doctrine; and a number of the moſt common and principal objections, fairly ſtated, and anſwered. This was my firſt appearance in the world as a *proſe* writer, which was what I never expected to be, and probably ſhould never have been but for this occaſion; ſtill leſs a writer of controverſy, to which I had naturally a great averſion.

After I had preached this ſermon, I had the *Chevalier Ramſey's Philoſophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion* put into my hands; I read the ſame with great pleaſure and advantage, and I muſt acknowledge it to be

be a work of great merit, and I have reaſon to bleſs God that ever I had opportunity of reading it. I can heartily recommend it, as one of the beſt works in our language; and I muſt ſay, that in moſt things I fully agree with that very intelligent author. On the fourth day of January 1782, I preached the ſermon called, *The Outcaſts Comforted*; from Iſaiah lxvi. 5. to my friends who had been caſt out, and excommunicated, for believing this glorious doctrine. This was ſoon after printed, and the next year it was republiſhed in *London*, by the Rev. Mr. *Richard Clark*, and was the firſt of my works ever printed here.

I have thus given a brief plain and ſimple account of the means that have brought me to think and write in the manner that I have done, and which account may be conſidered as an hiſtorical ſketch of nearly four years of my life.

I have every year ſince printed and publiſhed ſomething, which I judged might be uſeful to my fellow-creatures; but as my works are in the hands of moſt of my friends, it is not neceſſary to give a particular account of any of them here, except this book of DIALOGUES ON THE UNIVERSAL RESTORATION. I have had many diſcourſes with various perſons upon this ſubject, and many objections have been propoſed to me, which I have endeavoured to anſwer; and I can truly ſay, that theſe diſcourſes, their queſtions, and my anſwers, their objections, and my ſo-

lutions, form the bulk of these Dialogues. I have endeavoured to give all the possible force to their objections, and if any of them are weak, I can assure the Public, that I have not made them so (as some have insinuated) merely that I might be able to answer them, but the weakest of them have been proposed to me, and I have fairly set down the most powerful that I ever heard, generally in the very words in which they were addressed to me, whether in conversation, or by letter; and I am willing if stronger objections can be made, to put them in the place of those which I have set down, or add them to the number; and I have in this new edition added a few, which I have heard since the work was first published, and especially one which was sent me by a venerable Minister, from AMERICA, and which I have largely answered.

I have the satisfaction of knowing not only that these Dialogues have been well received, but that they have been the means of bringing many persons to the belief of the truth of the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, and have strengthened and confirmed others, as will plainly appear from the following extracts of letters, which I have received from several Ministers in different parts of the kingdom, since their publication.

"*Wisbich, October* 26, 1788.

"DEAR SIR,

"I AM persuaded your knowledge of the world and its inhabitants, hath long since taught you to be familiar

liar with the addreſſes of perſons unknown to you; and I have formed that opinion of you, that your candour will admit, and your generous mind rejoice to hear, that a perſon, though unknown to you, is convinced that God hath gracious deſigns towards univerſal man. I am that perſon, Sir. For ſome time paſt I have entertained doubts with reſpect to the *eternity of hell torments*. My doubts principally aroſe from the conſideration of the vaſt diſproportion between *momentary crimes, committed in this ſhort life*, and the ſuffering *infinitude* of puniſhment: yet many difficulties lay in my way that I did not know how to remove, and I continued thus embarraſſed, until a ſhort time ſince I had the happineſs to meet with your DIALOGUES ON THE UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, which, I thank God, have helped me much. My ardent prayer is, that the truth may ſpread, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified.

" My good friend, Mr. F——, ſhewed me your letter to him, by which I ſee your readineſs to ſerve the cauſe of our great *Head*, Chriſt Jeſus, and your willingneſs to viſit the country, provided the way is open. Now, Sir, I can only ſay, That my houſe, and my heart, and my pulpit will be all open to receive you, provided you will viſit us in this part of the world.

" I remain, with the utmoſt reſpect,
Dear Sir,
Your ſincere friend,
HENRY POOLE."

" DEAR SIR,

" THOUGH perſonally unkown, have taken the liberty of addreſſing you with a few lines. I was lately in LONDON, and called to ſee you; but was told you were out of town. Have for ſome time had the pleaſure of reading your Dialogues, much to my ſatisfaction.

" The ſubject of UNIVERSAL RESTITUTION has for many years engaged my thoughts at times, and often appeared in an amiable light to my mind. It is a ſubject that redounds to the everlaſting honour of God, and the everlaſting felicity of the rational creature, who, when delivered from miſery, ſhall be fully ſenſible of the obligations due to the Deliverer,

Deliverer, and consequently, shall naturally be engaged in the great and delightful work of praising and honouring both the Author and Accomplisher of the great salvation.

" My residence is at *Lyndhurst*, in the *New Forest*, *Hants*. where I am pastor over a little church of General Baptists, of which denomination I am informed you are; but be that as it may, it is no small pleasure to me to find men, of whatever denomination, vindicate the goodness of God, in the manner it is done by the doctrine of UNIVERSAL RESTORATION.

Should inclination or leisure ever favour your coming this way, I know not who I shall be more happy to see and enjoy. Permit me to subscribe myself,

Your affectionate brother, in the Gospel of universal love,

" ADAM ALDRIDGE."

Lyndhurst, *December* 4, 1789.

" *York*, *March* 6, 1790.

" REV. AND DEAR SIR,

" I HOPE you will excuse the freedom I have taken in writing to you.

" I have for several years embraced your sentiments, and have often stood up in defence of them

" I have frequently met with learned and candid men, who have given me much satisfaction in this important subject. When your Dialogues were published, I procured and read them with the greatest avidity. I found the subject handled much to my mind. The strongest objections raised in all their weight and importance, and answered clearly and candidly. I read the book, over and over, with fresh pleasure and satisfaction. I studied the arguments, treasured them up in my memory, and determined to become a defender of this part of truth. My heart burnt in love to God and mankind I found exalted views of God, raised exalted strains of gratitude and praise. It was one of the strongest and most attracting views that ever I met with since I knew the Saviour's love. I soon entered the field, and was obliged to prove my armour against the strongest objections, backed with prejudices almost of an invincible nature. When I was hard put to it, I had recourse

to your Magazine, and from thence brought forth new pieces of artillery. You will eaſily ſuppoſe I had many trials from perſons of different diſpoſitions. By perſuading ſeveral of my acquaintance, Miniſters of the Goſpel, to read over your book, I became an inſtrument of winning them over to the truth.

"One of my brethren in the miniſtry proteſted much againſt our notions, and declared he would never believe them. Knowing him to be a ſenſible man, and one who might be wrought upon by the force of truth properly ſtated, I uſed ſeveral arguments to perſuade him to read the book. At length he conſented, and ſaid, that he would do it to oblige me, but was determined not to believe it. I told him, it would ſatisfy me for him to give it a candid reading.

"When we met again, I began to enquire what he thought of the book. He pauſed a little, and then freely acknowledged the effect that it had had upon him—He frankly declared that his reſolution was juſt the ſame, as though he had reſolved to look up to the Heavens when the ſun ſhone at noon, and not to believe that it ſhone. I have ſecretly engaged ſeveral, and find when they are ſenſible, candid men, they fall in with your ſentiments at once.

"I am acquainted with about half a ſcore Miniſters, who firmly believe and heartily embrace the doctrine; beſides many private chriſtians of different denominations. Moſt of us Miniſters, who fall in with your ſentiments, are afraid of confeſſing them publickly, for this reaſon, our people would thruſt us out of the ſynagogues, and we and our families might ſuffer thereby. For my own part, I am determined to ſtand by this truth, whether I can continue my place among the people where I am or not. Rather than give up this (through grace) I would give up life.

"I have ſo much zeal in my heart for the confirmation and eſtabliſhment of this truth, that I would, were it in my power, gladly proſelyte all men to embrace and enjoy the benefit of it.

"I hope you will muſter up all your reſolution, and ſtand forth boldly again in vindication of the cauſe of truth, and the moſt glorious and moſt neglected part of that truth that all men ought to embrace. I fear leſt the enemy ſhall cauſe a ſhout of triumph if you refuſe again to engage, and do not come forth to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty. Pleaſe to inform me if you want any help where you are; I have

I have ſome little fortune, and would engage in promoting the work of God, without being wholly dependent on any people.

" Direct to J. P. at Mr. *John Brown's* Bookſeller, *Pocklington Yorkſhire.*

" Sincerely praying for the ſucceſs of your labours, and your welfare of body and mind,

" I am in truth, your affectionate friend,
And ſervant in CHRIST JESUS."

" *Ayleſbury, September, 22d* 1790.

" REV. AND DEAR SIR,

" AN anxious deſire of a more intimate acquaintance with you induces me to take this liberty of writing to you, hoping you will excuſe my freedom; undoubtedly it will appear ſtrange, that one you never ſaw nor heard of, ſhould take ſuch liberty. But as a foe to flattery, I juſt give you this ſhort account of my firſt knowledge of you; which was only by the hearing of the ear.

" Something more than a year ago, I was told that there was a preacher juſt come to *London, an American* by birth, who had undertaken to preach an UNIVERSAL RESTORATION of loſt ſouls. As it was new to me, I was much ſurpriſed at this ſtrange account, and I thought and ſaid, (though with ſome degree of candour) that I looked upon it to be ſome one that could not dig, and was aſhamed to beg, ſo to procure a living he had written this book. Here I reſted for ſome time, thinking that much hurt would be done thereby; till the laſt time I ſaw Mr. *Atkins*, (who I underſtand is now in connection with you) he gave me ſome further account of you and your doctrine. But I could not underſtand it from his account; yet he perſiſted I ſhould believe it, if I was to read your *Dialogues*. I told him I would give them a fair reading, if I could ſee them. Still I entertained the ſame ſtrange idea as before. The next account I had was from a young man of *Berkhampſtead*, who came to ſee me, and in our diſcourſe, I ſaid, " Some " of your people have imbibed a new doctrine, I hear." He ſaid, " Yes, and I verily believe it a truth." I was now more ſurpriſed than before; but he ſaid, if I was to ſee it he had no doubt but I ſhould believe it alſo. " Well," ſaid I " if I could ſee the book I would lay prejudice aſide,

and

and give it a fair reading, let it be what it may." He very kindly told me, that as soon as he could get it home, (for he had lent it to a friend) he would send it to me. I thanked him, and promised to read it impartially, knowing that where party spirit reigns, blindness takes place.

"According to promise, he sent the book; and as I had done before, I now laid the matter before the Lord, with this petition, that he would not suffer me to be misled, or wander out of the way, as I knew that he knew my desire and intention. I was delivered from fear, and with candour and confidence I began to read my new book, and to my great astonishment, yet to my greater joy, I found what I had many times wished for secretly in my heart, namely, the possibility of a release for those poor sufferers, and not only so, but likewise the certainty of it; for as I read on, I could not but see, that it was the determination of JEHOVAH to make all men, as his creatures, happy in himself. O with what eyes did I now view the Deity, and what ideas did I entertain of him to what I had ever done before! (though I was on the general plan) O how my soul was filled with love! what gratitude did I feel to that God, who I now saw so loved all his creatures as to give his only Son to die, with a pure design to glorify himself in the salvation of every soul! I now saw him a God of love indeed, but it is out of my power to tell fully the happy effect it had, and has now upon my mind; but it is something like what I experienced, when the Lord first set my soul at liberty; as I was then swallowed up, as in the vision of God. But the bigness of this sheet is not sufficient to tell you all I could wish, but I trust I shall see you in person, as I should esteem it a privilege indeed to hear you preach, and to converse with you, and I fully intended coming to LONDON about last May, on purpose, but as I had already a large family which, through the blessing of God, I maintain with my labour; finding it likely to increase, I could not well spare time to come, or I had been with you at that season, as I had nothing else in my way to hinder. Mr. JOHN HOLDER, of *Tring*, an acquaintance of mine, has lent me a few little tracts of yours, which I am now reading with pleasure and profit, and he has kindly offered himself to accompany me at any time that I shall appoint to come and see you, but the same difficulty is now in the way as before. If ever Providence should open a way, I shall gladly embrace the op-

portunity. Though I have no doubt of the truth of the doctrine of the Reſtoration, as to myſelf, I have never ſpoke of it in public as yet, not knowing whether that may be the beſt way to make this glorious ſalvation known; but I have ſpoke to ſeveral of the people in private, thoſe whom I judged to have the beſt underſtanding, and the moſt candour; and moſt of theſe ſeem to be glad at the news, and my own wife in particular embraces it with all thankfulneſs, and joins with me in love to you and yours. (Though very ill at this time.) If it will not be attended with too much trouble, pleaſe to ſend me your *Dialogues*, bound, by the *Ayleſbury* ſtage coach. I have given the coachman an order to pay the expence. As I ſtand like yourſelf (in this reſpect) unconnected with any party, (though I was with Mr. WESLEY's people twelve years,) I am now free, I truſt from bigotry and prejudice, open to conviction, and willing for inſtruction. A few lines from you will be gratefully acknowledged, and thankfully received, by your affectionate, tho' moſt unworthy, may I ſay, brother in Chriſt?

"THOMAS HIGGINS."

P. S. "I pray God of his mercy to give you all the wiſdom that you need, to make this great ſalvation more fully known, as I believe he hath raiſed you up for this purpoſe, and that a double portion of his Spirit may reſt upon you, and that your labours may be crowned with more abundant ſucceſs, till the Sun of Righteouſneſs is ſeen in his full ſtrength, and with all his ability to ſave.

"Direct to THOMAS HIGGINS, *Ayleſbury*, BUCKS."

I take the liberty of publiſhing theſe Letters, with the names and places of abode of the writers, as a kind of beginning of that general acquaintance, which I ſhould wiſh to ſee take place among all the friends of this doctrine in theſe kingdoms. I know ſeveral other Miniſters in England, who believe and preach the UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, and I truſt their numbers will increaſe. In AMERICA,

AMERICA, where I once ſtood almoſt in theſe views alone, (among thoſe who ſpeak the Engliſh tongue) there are now many who teſtify this Goſpel of the free univerſal grace of God, and they have formed a connection of ſocieties on this plan, who meet by their repreſentatives in convention yearly, at *Philadelphia*, and I could wiſh a plan of the ſame nature might be adopted in this country. If any thing that I have ſpoken or written may be of uſe to my fellow creatures, and may tend to promote the glory of God, and the intereſt of the dear Redeemer in the world, I ſhall have the ſatisfaction to reflect, that I have not wholly lived in vain.

LONDON, APRIL, 2, 1792.

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Page	Line	
9	8	Dele Lev. viii. 15.
10	bottom line,	inſtead of a period put a comma.
11	1	Put a note of interrogation after ſea.
27	15 and 16	For *cis* r. *eis*, and for *aionos* r. *aionion*.
47	30	For Jer. xxxiii. 40. r. xxiii. 40.
69		The figures are 66.
70	7	Dele the letter *t* after the word *great*.
89	26	Put in a note of interrogation inſtead of a period after the word him.
102	30	For *Minſter* r. *Miniſter*.
114	bottom line,	For held, r. hold.
130	12	For unto, r. into.
149	4	For thine, r. thy.
	7	For thy, r. thine.
152	28	After the word No, add a comma.
170	bottom line,	After the word able, add alſo.
178	29	For is it, r. it is.
186	bottom line,	For exellent, r. excellent.
202	19	For o, r. of.

FAMILIAR DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

A MINISTER AND HIS FRIEND,

CONCERNING

THE DOCTRINE OF

THE RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS.

DIALOGUE I.

Friend. I HAVE taken the freedom to call upon you, to have a little diſcourſe with you concerning the doctrine of *the Reſtoration of all Things*, which it is ſaid you believe; and to propoſe ſome objections.

Miniſter. I am happy to ſee you, and am willing to diſcourſe, as well as I am able, upon any ſubject that may be agreeable; but I have always made it a rule never to preſs the belief of my ſentiments upon my friends; and I can ſafely ſay, that, though ſuch great pains have been taken by my adverſaries to prejudice people againſt me, I have never gone about from houſe to houſe to propagate my opinions; and I make it an univerſal rule not to introduce the ſubject in converſation, unleſs deſired; but yet I never have refuſed to own my ſentiments,

when aſked, reſpecting the matter; and am ready, in the fear of God, to anſwer any objections that can be made, to a doctrine which I believe is plainly revealed in the Scriptures of truth, and appears to me worthy of God.

Friend. I ſhall firſt of all bring to view that grand objection, which is formed from the word *eternal* or *everlaſting*, being applied to a future ſtate of puniſhment; as in the following paſſages: Iſaiah xxxiii. 14. "The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs "hath ſurprized the hypocrites. Who among us "ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who among "us ſhall dwell with *everlaſting* burnings?"

Dan. xii. 2. "And many of them that ſleep in the "duſt of the earth ſhall awake, ſome to *everlaſting* "life, and ſome to ſhame and *everlaſting* con-"tempt."

St. Matt. xviii. 8. "Wherefore, if thine hand "or thy foot offend thee (or cauſe thee to offend) "cut them off, and caſt them from thee; it is bet-"ter for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, "rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be "caſt into *everlaſting* fire."

St. Matt. xxv. 41. "Then ſhall he ſay alſo "unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye "curſed, into *everlaſting* fire, prepared for the de-"vil and his angels." Verſe 46, "Theſe ſhall go "away into *everlaſting* puniſhment: but the righte-"ous into life *eternal*, or *everlaſting*,"—The ſame word in the original being uſed for both, though varied by the tranſlators.

St. Mark, iii. 29. "But he that ſhall blaſ-"pheme againſt the Holy Ghoſt, hath never "forgiveneſs;' but is in danger of *eternal* damna-"tion."

2. Theſ. i. 7, 8, 9. "The Lord Jeſus ſhall be "revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in "flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that "know

" know not God, and that obey not the gospel of " our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished " with *everlasting* destruction, from the presence " of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Jude, 6, 7. " And the angels which kept not " their first estate, but left their own habitation, " he hath reserved in *everlasting* chains under " darkness, unto the judgment of the great day: " Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities " about them in like manner, giving themselves " over unto fornication, and going after strange " flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the " vengeance of *eternal* fire."

These texts, altogether, form such an objection to the doctrine of the Restoration, that I can by no means believe it, unless this can be fairly answered, and proofs brought from the Scriptures to shew, that the words *everlasting* and *eternal*, (which are translations of the same word and synonimous) being connected with the punishment of the wicked, and their future misery, do not necessarily imply the continuance of the same while God exists.

Minister. I am glad that you have so fairly and fully stated the matter; and I highly commend your resolution, not to believe the *universal doctrine*, unless this can be answered fully, without any torturing or twisting the Scriptures; and if I am not able, with God's assistance, to remove this difficulty, I will publicly recant my sentiments.

But, before I come to give a direct answer, I would beg leave to remark how very seldom this word is used to express the duration of punishment. We should think, by some sermons we hear, that *everlasting* is applied to misery in every book of the New Testament, if not in every chapter. A friend of mine told me, that he was once preaching in

Maryland, and after ſermon a man came and aſked him, of what denomination he was? To which he anſwered, A Baptiſt. I think, ſays the man, that you do not preach up ſo much *everlaſting damnation*, as the Baptiſts and Methodiſts, among us, do. To which my friend replied, *Everlaſting damnation* is found in the Scripture. True, anſwered the man; but ſome preachers give us more of it in one ſermon than is to be found in the whole Bible. The truth of this remark will appear, if we conſider that St. Luke, never uſes the word *aionion*, or *everlaſting*, as connected with the miſery of the wicked, in his goſpel; nor St. Mark but once, and then in a particular caſe only: In the goſpel of St. John, it is not to be found at all, in that connection, nor in any of his epiſtles: In the account of the preaching of the apoſtles through the world, in the firſt age of Chriſtianity, we do not find it mentioned, in that light, ſo much as once: No, not in all the ſermons, and parts of ſermons, which St. Luke has preſerved in the Book of the Acts: though the doctrine of *everlaſting damnation* is the ſubſtance of many modern diſcourſes. St. Paul never mentions *everlaſting deſtruction* but once, tho' his writings form ſuch a conſiderable part of the New Teſtament. Neither are ſuch words found in the epiſtle of St. James, or in thoſe of St. Peter; and but three times in the goſpel of St. Matthew: And only twice in all the Old Teſtament. But was the word *aionion* applied to miſery but once, in the whole Bible, it would deſerve a ſerious conſideration; and unleſs the force of it can be removed by the authority of Scripture, it muſt remain an unanſwerable objection. But I ſhall proceed to anſwer it, by bringing an equal number of paſſages where the word *everlaſting* is applied to *things* and *times*, that have had, or muſt have, an end. As in the following paſſages: Gen. xvii. 7, 8. "And I will

" will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and " thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their genera- " tions, for an *everlaſting* covenant; to be a God " unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee. And I " will give unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee, " the land wherein thou art a ſtranger, all the " land of Canaan, for an *everlaſting* poſſeſſion; " and I will be their God." Verſe 13. " He that " is born in thy houſe, and bought with thy mo- " ney, muſt needs be circumciſed: and my cove- " nant ſhall be in your fleſh for an *everlaſting* co- " venant."

Here note, that the land of Canaan is called an *everlaſting* poſſeſſion; and the covenant of circumciſion in their fleſh, an *everlaſting* covenant, though it is certain that the land of Canaan, as well as the other parts of the earth muſt be diſſolved or melted, in the general conflagration; and *circumciſion* is now declared null and void by the Holy Ghoſt; and the ceremony cannot endure to endleſs ages.

Of the ſame kind are the following paſſages: Gen. xlviii. 3, 4. " And Jacob ſaid unto Joſeph, " God Almighty appeared to me at Luz, in " the land of Canaan, and bleſſed me; and ſaid " unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and " multiply thee, and I will make of thee a mul- " titude of people: and will give this land to thy " ſeed after thee, for an *everlaſting* poſſeſſion." And in the bleſſing of Joſeph, he ſays, " The " bleſſings of thy father have prevailed above the " bleſſings of my progenitors, unto the utmoſt " bound of the *everlaſting* hills." By which, I ſuppoſe, the hills of the land of Canaan were meant.

God ſaith to Moſes, Exod. xl. 15. " And thou " ſhalt anoint them (Aaron's ſons) as thou didſt " anoint their father, that they may miniſter unto " me in the prieſt's office; for their anointing ſhall " ſurely

" ſurely be an *everlaſting* prieſthood, throughout " their generations." Lev. xvi. 34. " And this " ſhall be an *everlaſting* ſtatute unto you, to make " an atonement for the Children of Iſrael, for all " their ſins, once a year; and he did as JEHO- " VAH commanded Moſes."

The apoſtle declares, that theſe *everlaſting* ordinances were only *till the time of reformation*, Heb. ix. 10. And this *everlaſting* prieſthood of Aaron's ſons has ceaſed long ago: " For the prieſthood " being changed, (by Chriſt) there is, of neceſ- " ſity a change alſo of the law: For he of whom " theſe things are ſpoken, pertaineth to another " tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the " altar: For it is evident, that our Lord ſprang " out of Judah; of which tribe Moſes ſpake no- " thing concerning prieſthood. And it is yet far " more evident: For that, after the ſimilitude of " Melchiſedec, there ariſeth another prieſt, who is " made not after the law of a carnal command- " ment, but after the power of an endleſs life: For " he teſtifieth, Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the " order of Melchiſedec: For there is verily a diſ- " annulling of the commandment going before, " for the weakneſs and unprofitableneſs thereof." Heb. vii. 12—18. The whole ſum of the apoſtle's argument, in this epiſtle, tends to prove, that the *everlaſting* ordinance is now no more; and the *everlaſting* prieſthood of Aaron and his ſons, is now aboliſhed.

Another paſſage where the word *everlaſting* is evidently uſed in a limited ſenſe, is, Numb. xxv 11, 12, 13. where we read thus: " Phinehas, the " ſon of Eleazar, the ſon of Aaron the prieſt, hath " turned my wrath away from the Children of Iſ- " rael, while he was zealous for my ſake among " them, that I conſumed not the Children of Iſrael " in my jealouſy. Wherefore ſay, Behold, I give

" unto

" unto him my covenant of peace: And he ſhall " have it, and his ſeed after him, even the cove- " nant of an *everlaſting* prieſthood; becauſe he was " zealous for his God, and made an atonement " for the Children of Iſrael."

If the word *everlaſting* intends *endleſs duration*, how ſhould we be able to reconcile this promiſe with the total ceſſation of the Levitical prieſthood? As for the family of Phinehas, with whom this covenant of an *everlaſting* prieſthood was made, it was entirely deprived of the benefit of the ſame, within the ſpace of four hundred years: For when the ſons of Eli tranſgreſſed the covenant, by profaning it, God ſent him word, that as they had broken it on their parts, it was entirely, and to all intents and purpoſes diſſolved. Read 1 Sam. ii. from the beginning of the 12th verſe to the end of the 17th, and from the 27th verſe to the end of the chapter: And alſo, chap. iii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

I will tranſcribe verſe 30, of the ſecond chapter, in proof of my point. " Wherefore, JEHOVAH, " God of Iſrael, ſaith, I ſaid, indeed, that thy " houſe, and the houſe of thy father, ſhould walk " before me *for ever*: But now JEHOVAH ſaith, Be " it far from me, for them that honour me, I will " honour; and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be light- " ly eſteemed." Hophni, and Phinehas, were ſoon after ſlain in one day; and Saul, the king of Iſrael, ſent Doeg, the Edomite, who fell upon the prieſts, and ſlew fourſcore and five perſons, who wore a linen ephod, in one day. " And Nob, the city of " the prieſts, ſmote he with the edge of the ſword; " both men, and women, and children, and ſuck- " lings, and oxen, and aſſes, and ſheep, with the " edge of the ſword." 1 Sam. xxii. 19. The whole houſe of Phinehas ſeems to have been deſtroyed at this time, except Abiathar; and when Solomon came to the throne, he thruſt him out from being prieſt,

prieſt, " that he might fulfil the word of JEHO-
" VAH, which he ſpake concerning the houſe of
" Eli, in Shiloh," 1 Kings, ii. 27. From this time, the houſe of Ithamar had the prieſthood.

It is ſo evident that the word which is tranſlated *everlaſting*, cannot in the nature of things, abſolutely ſignify, *without end*, that I ſhould not think it worth while to quote any more paſſages in proof of its intending *age*, or *ages*, only, were it not conſtantly uſed as a great objection againſt the univerſal Reſtoration: I ſhall, therefore, inſtance two or three more in particular, in this place, and refer to a great number of others, of the ſame kind; all tending to prove the ſame thing. Hab. iii. 6. " The *everlaſting* mountains were ſcattered, the
" *perpetual* hills did bow." The goſpel is called,
" the *everlaſting* goſpel," Rev. xiv. 6. yet it muſt ceaſe to be preached, when it ſhall be needed no longer. Jonah ſaith, " The earth with her bars
" was about me, *for ever:* yet haſt thou brought
" up my life from corruption, O JEHOVAH, my
" God." Jonah, ii. 6. But it would be the higheſt abſurdity upon the ſuppoſition that the word *Legnolam*, here rendered, *for ever*, properly ſignifies *without end*, for him to ſay, that his life was brought up from corruption; and, therefore, we know that he could not uſe it in that ſenſe, becauſe, on the third day, he was delivered from his dreadful priſon. There is no doubt but the time that he was there, ſeemed an age, and, while he was thus ſhut up, there was no intermiſſion to the darkneſs, and diſtreſs, that overwhelmed him; and, therefore he might ſay, with propriety, that
" the earth, with her bars, was about him, for
" ever," (i. e. *perpetually without ceſſation*) during the period he remained in the fiſh's belly; which appeared to him, as a long age indeed. But, as it would be a work of much time and labour to mention

mention all the paſſages where the word tranſlated *for ever*, evidently intends only an age, or period, I ſhall juſt direct you to the following; which you may look over at your leiſure.

Gen. xiii. 15. xliii. 9. xliv. 32.—Exod. xii. 14, 17, 24. xxi. 6. xxvii. 21. xxviii. 43. xxix. 9, 28. xxx. 21. xxxi. 16, 17, xxxii. 13.—Lev. iii. 17. vi. 13, 18, 20, 22, vii. 34, 36. viii. 15. x. 9, 15. xvi. 29, 31. xxiii. 14, 21, 31, 41. xxiv. 3. xxv. 30, 46.—Numb. x. 8. xv. 15. xviii. 8, 19. xix. 10.—Deut. iv. 40. xv. 17. xviii. 5. xxviii. 46. —Joſhua iv. 7. xiv. 9.—1 Sam. ii. 30. iii. 13. xxvii. 12. xxviii. 2.—1 Kings, xii. 7.—2 Kings, v. 27.—2 Chron. x. 7.

Here are more than fifty paſſages, where the word rendered *for ever* intends only *age*, or *ages*; to which many more might be added.

Now, the rule for underſtanding words is this: What *muſt* be the meaning of the word, in *many* places, and what *may* be the meaning in *all*; is the true ſenſe of the ſame.

Friend. Although the ſingle word *forever*, in theſe paſſages, ſeems evidently to intend certain unknown, *limited* periods; yet, what can you do with thoſe texts that ſay, the miſery of the wicked ſhall endure *for ever and ever?*

Miniſter. Indeed, they are terrible threatenings; and, no doubt, will be fully executed.

Friend, But, do you imagine that ſuch paſſages as the following can intend leſs than *endleſs miſery?* Rev. xiv. 11. "And the ſmoke of their torment "aſcendeth up, *for ever and ever:* and theyhave no "reſt, day nor night, who worſhip the beaſt and "his image, and whoſoever receiveth the mark of "his name." Rev. xix. 3. "And her ſmoke "roſe up *for ever and ever.*" Rev. xx. 10. "And "the devil, that deceived them, was caſt into the "lake of fire and brimſtone, where the beaſt and

" the falſe prophet are, and ſhall be tormented,
" day and night, *for ever and ever.*"

Miniſter. I confeſs, you have propoſed a difficulty that I ſhould judge to be unanſwerable, were it not for the following conſiderations:

1ſt, If *for ever and ever* is a longer time than *for ever*, which muſt be granted; then is there ſome proportion between them: Thus, if *for ever* intends an *age, period*, or ſometimes *ages*; *for ever and ever*, may intend *ages*, an *age* of *ages*, or *ages* of *ages:* But any *proportion* at all between two periods, ſuppoſes both *to have an end*, or there could *be no proportion.*

2dly, I find a time promiſed, when, " there ſhall
" be no more death; neither ſorrow nor crying;
" neither ſhall there be any more pain; for the for-
" mer things are (or ſhall then be) paſſed away.
" And he that ſat upon the throne ſaid, Behold,
" I make all things new. And he ſaid unto me,
" (John) Write; for theſe words are true and
" faithful." Rev. xxi. 4, 5.

3dly, I think there is ſufficient reaſon, from the words of St. Peter, in his ſecond epiſtle, third chapter, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12 verſes, to conclude, that as the earth was once overflowed with water, and became truly a lake of water, wherein the world of ungodly men periſhed; ſo, by the general conflagration, the ſame ſhall become literally the lake of fire and brimſtone, in which the wicked ſhall be puniſhed after the day of judgment: But I alſo think, that the 13th verſe of the ſame chapter, compared with Rev. xxi. 1. Iſaiah lxv. 17. lxvi. 22. more than intimates, that the new heaven and earth ſhall be created out of the ſubſtance of the old, diſſolved by the fire; that the *new earth* ſhall no more have a *ſea* therein, ſeems to imply, that in its former ſtate, it had a *ſea*, or why this expreſſion.

" And

" And there was no *more* ſea."— Now, if this hypotheſis is right, the following will be the true ſtate of the caſe; *viz.*

The lake of fire is expreſſly declared to be "the "ſecond death," Rev. xx. 14. The earth, in its burnt, melted, and diſſolved ſtate, will be the general lake of fire and brimſtone; according to the verſes above cited from St. Peter. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, created out of the ſubſtance of the old, in which there will be no more ſea, either of water, or of liquid fire; conſequently, the lake of fire, or ſecond death, (which are declared to be ſynonimous) muſt end; and, of courſe, the puniſhment of the ſecond death muſt then ceaſe.

4*thly*, The *ſmoke* of their torment is to aſcend up *for ever and ever*, and they are to be tormented day and night: But, as the ſmoke of the burning earth muſt ceaſe, when its ſubſtance is entirely diſſolved or melted, and all combuſtible bodies are conſumed; and as it is intimated in Job xxvi. 10. that day and night ſhall come to an end: and in Rev. xxi. 25. it is ſaid of the New Jeruſalem, "And "the gates of it ſhall not be ſhut at all by day, for "there ſhall be no night there." For all theſe reaſons, I cannot be altogether perſuaded, that their being tormented *day and night*, *for ever and ever*, during which time the ſmoke of their torment ſhall conſtantly aſcend, is quite equal to *endleſs miſery*; eſpecially as there ſhall come a time when *death* ſhall be no more, *pain* ſhall be no more, *ſorrow* ſhall be no more, *ſmoke* ſhall probably aſcend no more, and, peradventure, *night* ſhall be no more.

5*thly*, But the great reaſon of all, why I do not conceive that *for ever and ever*, doth certainly intend *endleſs duration*, is, becauſe I find the words as often uſed for *times* and *periods*, that muſt have

an end, as you find them uſed for the miſery of the wicked. You bring three paſſages, which are all that are to be found in the whole Bible, where they are uſed in that ſenſe; I ſhall now invalidate thoſe evidences for *endleſs damnation*, by bringing an equal number of texts, where you will allow the words are uſed in a limited ſenſe.

Friend. Is it poſſible that you can find any ſuch paſſages in the Bible? Pray ſhew them to me.

Miniſter. Iſa. xxx. 8. "Now go, write it before "them in a table, and note it in a book, that it "may be for the time to come, *for ever and ever.*"

See Jer. vii. 1—7. The 7th verſe is, "Then "will I cauſe you to dwell in this place, in the "land that I gave to your fathers, *for ever and* "*ever.*"

Jer. xxv. 5. "Turn ye again, now, every one "from his evil way, and every one from the evil "of your doings, and dwell in the land that JE-"HOVAH hath given unto you, and to your fa-"thers, *for ever and ever.*"

Theſe paſſages are as many, and as ſtrongly expreſſed, as thoſe which you brought to prove *endleſs miſery*; and yet nothing can be more evident than that they cannot intend *endleſs duration.*—Here, theſe periods muſt be limited by the great conflagration; and thus (for ought that appears as yet) the miſery of the wicked *may* be *limited*, notwithſtanding the uſe of thoſe expreſſions, to ſet forth its dreadful continuance to unknown ages; at leaſt, thoſe words do not neceſſarily imply, that they ſhall never, as long as God lives, be delivered from their ſins and conſequent ſufferings.

If we were always to read *for ever and ever*, ENDLESS, we ſhould ſet the Scriptures at variance; and no criticiſm could ever reconcile them. Try, for inſtance, to reconcile Pſalm cii. 25, 26, with Pſalm cxlviii. 6. "Of old haſt thou laid the foundation

"of

" of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy " hands. They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt en- " dure: yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a gar- " ment; as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and " they ſhall be changed.—He hath alſo eſtabliſhed " them *for ever and ever:* he hath made a decree " which ſhall not paſs."

Now, if the words *for ever and ever*, ſignify *without end*, then there is a contradiction that cannot be reconciled; but only underſtand them *ages of ages*, (as, indeed, they ought to be rendered) and the whole difficulty vaniſhes at once.

Suppoſe a perſon ſhould read Rev. xx. 11. and xxi. 1. " And I ſaw a great white throne, and " him that ſat upon it, from whoſe face the earth " and the heaven fled away; and there was found " no place for them. And I ſaw a new heaven, " and a new earth; for the firſt heaven and the " firſt earth were paſſed away; and there was no " more ſea;" And ſhould then ſay, Theſe viſions cannot be true, becauſe Solomon hath ſaid, " One generation paſſeth away, and another " cometh, but the earth abideth *for ever*," Eccleſ. i. 4. And God " laid the foundations of the " earth, that it ſhould not be removed, *for ever*," Pſal. civ. 5. " The world alſo is eſtabliſhed, that " it cannot be moved," Pſal. xciii. 1. See alſo Pſal. lxxviii. 69. and xcvi. 10. What would you think of ſuch reaſoning? Juſt ſo weak, muſt all reaſoning againſt the univerſal Reſtoration be, from the words *for ever*, and *for ever* and *ever*, being applied to ſtates of future miſery, if God has promiſed to put an end to them all, by reconciling all things to himſelf, deſtroying ſin, and introducing a new creation, and a ſtate of univerſal and permanent happineſs: For, if ſuch promiſes really exiſt, and their exiſtence can be demonſtrated, all reaſoning againſt them muſt be vain and futile.

Friend.

Friend. It is certain, that when the word *for ever* is applied to things of this life and world, it intends *a period*; but when applied to ſpiritual matters, and things of another world, it muſt be *endleſs*, according to my judgment; and I am apt to think, you will find it ſo too.

Miniſter. I am certain, that you will ſoon be convinced to the contrary. The apoſtle, ſpeaking of Chriſt, ſays, "But this man, after he had of-" fered one ſacrifice for ſins, *for ever* ſat down on " the right hand of God; from henceforth, ex-" pecting till his enemies be made his footſtool," Heb. x. 12, 13. You will pleaſe to notice, that Chriſt's ſitting down in the heavens, on the right hand of God, is not a circumſtance belonging to *this world*, or *the things of time*; and he is to ſit there *for ever*; and yet that period, which, according to your hypotheſis, muſt be *endleſs*, is expreſſly limited by the ſacred writings: The heavens have received him, "until the times (ſeaſons, or ages) " of reſtitution of all things," (that is, till the beginning, and not the ending of thoſe times) "which God hath ſpoken of by the mouth of all " his holy prophets ſince the world began," Acts, iii. 21. And the whole New Teſtament teacheth us, to wait for the coming of Jeſus, from heaven; (1 Theſ. i. 10.) which would be highly abſurd, upon the ſuppoſition, that he is *always* to abide there: Which yet he muſt, if the word *for ever*, as applied to things of *another* ſtate, intends *endleſs duration.*

Friend. I confeſs, I never obſerved this before: But, do you know of any paſſage in the New Teſtament, where the words, *for ever and ever*, certainly intend *limited* duration? For I obſerved, that all the inſtances you brought were from the Old Teſtament.

Miniſter.

Miniſter. Yes; Heb. i. 8. But unto the Son he ſaith, "Thy throne, (in diſtinction from the throne "of the Father) O God, is *for ever and ever*;" yet we read, (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.) of the *end*, when he ſhall have "delivered up the kingdom to God, "even the Father; when he ſhall have put down "all rule, and all authority and power: then ſhall "the Son alſo himſelf, be ſubject unto him that "put all things under him, that God may be all "in all."

Friend. But when Chriſt threatened ſinners, with *everlaſting* fire, *everlaſting* puniſhment, and *eternal* damnation; did not his expreſſions naturally convey the idea of *endleſs miſery?* And may not the Son of God be accuſed of duplicity and deceit, if he did not mean to denounce *puniſhment without end?* And, therefore, if we believe his words to be true, as moſt certainly they are, we muſt reject the doctrine of the Reſtoration, which puts an end to a ſtate, which is called *everlaſting*, by the mouth of truth itſelf.—Are you able to anſwer this fairly?

Miniſter. If I am not able to anſwer this objection, which you have ſtated in the ſtrongeſt manner, I aſſure you, I will confeſs myſelf in an error; and ſhall thank you, (as an inſtrument) for bringing me to know it. The ſame objection that you make againſt the Reſtoration, the Jews make againſt *Chriſt* and *his religion*; for they argue thus: God is an unchangeable Being, and he declared, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that the ordinances of the Levitical diſpenſation ſhould be *everlaſting*, and the anointing of Aaron's ſons ſhould be an *everlaſting* prieſthood, throughout their generations; (See Exod. xl. 15. and Lev. xvi. 34.) and, therefore, we muſt reject the Meſſiah of the Chriſtians, as an impoſtor; inaſmuch, as he pretends to aboliſh thoſe ſtatutes, which God hath called *everlaſting*, and to ſet himſelf up as a Prieſt, contrary

to

to the expreſs promiſe of the LORD, who cannot lye, nor repent, that Aaron and his ſons ſhould have an *everlaſting* prieſthood; and, therefore, if this is the true Meſſiah, God meant to deceive us, when he promiſed theſe *everlaſting* bleſſings, and privileges, which, we muſt ſuppoſe were only *for a time*, if Chriſtianity be true; therefore, we reject it, as being inconſiſtent with the promiſes of God.

It is evident, from this view of the matter, that the Jews reject Chriſt and his religion, upon as good ground, as you reject the univerſal Reſtoration, and perhaps better; for you have nothing to plead againſt the Reſtoration, but ſome threatenings of puniſhments, which are called *everlaſting*, or *eternal*, in our tranſlation; but they plead expreſs promiſes of the *everlaſting* continuance of their church-ſtate and worſhip, in oppoſition to Chriſtianity. But, if it be true, that both the Hebrew and Greek words, which our tranſlators have rendered by the Engliſh word *everlaſting*, do not intend *endleſs duration*, but, a *hidden period*, or *periods*; then the ground is changed at once, and the Jews have no right to object againſt Chriſtianity, becauſe God promiſed a continuance of their temple worſhip, for *a certain age*, or, *hidden period*; nor the Chriſtians to reject the univerſal Reſtoration, becauſe God hath threatened the rebellious with ſuch dreadful puniſhments, which ſhall endure through periods, expreſſed in the ſame terms. It is indeed confeſſed by ſome of the moſt learned Jews, that they have no word in their language, which abſolutely ſignifies *endleſs duration*; and therefore, they can only argue the *endleſs* continuance of any thing from its nature, and not merely from the words rendered *for ever*, or *everlaſting*. And, if this is the truth of the caſe, (as who can deny it?) then, neither did JEHOVAH ſpeak

ſpeak to deceive the Children of Iſrael, when he promiſed them bleſſings of ſuch long continuance, which have ended long ago, and which are never to be reſtored by virtue of that covenant which he made with their fathers, when he brought them out of Egypt: but by the new covenant, which he *will* make with them, when he ſhall return them to their own land; nor did the Son of God ſpeak to deceive, when he threatened the wicked with thoſe puniſhments, which ſhall not end *till they have anſwered the purpoſes for which it ſeems reaſonable to believe they ſhall be inflicted*; viz. to bring them down, and humble their proud and ſtubborn hearts; which ſhall be done, during the periods of his kingdom, before he ſhall have delivered it up to the Father, that God may be ALL IN ALL.

Friend. But if I ſhould grant that the word *aionion* doth not even in the New Teſtament always ſignify *endleſs duration*, yet what would you gain by it, ſince it is plain that Chriſt hath ſet *the happineſs of the righteous*, and *the miſery of the wicked*, one againſt the other; and hath expreſſed the continuance of both, by the ſame word, *aionion*, in St. Matth. xxv. 46? Here, the puniſhment of the wicked, and the life of the righteous, are both declared to be *aionion*, or *eternal*, without diſtinction: Now, can you ſhew me any paſſage of Scripture, where the ſame word is applied to two different things, whoſe exiſtence is not the ſame, or the time of their continuance not alike?

Miniſter. Fairly ſtated! And, if it be not as fairly anſwered, it ſhall be looked upon as an inſuperable difficulty. But, happily, there is a paſſage, in Hab. iii. 6. where the ſame word is uſed for very different things: "He ſtood, and mea-
"ſured the earth: he beheld, and drove aſun-

" der the nations; and the *everlaſting* mountains " were ſcattered, the *perpetual* hills did bow: his " ways are *everlaſting*." In our tranſlation, the mountains, and the ways of God, are called *everlaſting*, and the hills *perpetual*; but, in the original, the word *gnad* is applied to the mountains, and the word *gnolam* to the hills, and the ways of God. But whether we argue from the original, or from the tranſlation, it makes no difference: The queſtion is, Are the mountains, or the hills, *eternal* in the ſame ſenſe in which the ways of God are? If ſo, the earth muſt have exiſted *coeval* with the ways of JEHOVAH, and the hills, and mountains, muſt never be removed, while his ways endure; and, as his ways can never be deſtroyed, the abſolute eternity, not of the earth only, but of its preſent form, its mountains and hills, muſt be inferred: contrary to Iſaiah xl. 4. xliv. 10.—Ezek. xxxviii. 20.—2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 11, 12.—Rev. xvi. 20. xx. 11. Nay, even in this very text, the ways of God are ſpoken of as being of a different nature from the mountains, which were *ſcattered*, and the hills, which did *bow*.

Thus, no ſolid argument can be drawn from the application of the ſame word to *different* things, to prove that they ſhall be equal in their continuance, unleſs their nature be the ſame.

Thus, in the *Greek* New Teſtament, in Rom. xvi. 25. we read of the myſtery which hath been kept ſecret, from *Chronois aioniois*, and, in the 26th verſe, we find, that it is now made known by the commandment *Tou aioniou Theou*. But muſt it be argued that becauſe *aioniois* is applied to times, and *aionion* to God; therefore, *times* are as ancient as JEHOVAH, and muſt continue while he exiſts? The abſurdity of this is too glaring. Our tranſlators have rendered *Chronois aioniois*, "*ſince the world* " *began*," inſtead " of *eternal times*;" and have thereby

thereby ſhewn their judgment to be, that words cannot change the ſubjects to which they are applied, but the meaning of the words muſt be determined by the nature of the ſubjects.

In Jer. xxviii. 8. the word *hegnolam* is uſed in the Hebrew; but the tranſlators did not think themſelves obliged to render it "*from everlaſting*," or, "*from eternity*;" as it would have been highly abſurd to have read, *eternal* prophets, or prophets which were from *eternity*; and have therefore rendered it "*of old*," though it is a ſtronger word than *gnad*, which they have tranſlated "*eternity*," in Iſa. lvii. 15.

Many other inſtances of the like nature, might be brought; but theſe are fully ſufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind, that nothing can be concluded in favour of *endleſs puniſhment*, from the word *aionion* being uſed to ſet forth the duration of it, as well as the duration of that life which our Saviour promiſes to the righteous.

But upon the ſuppoſition that our Saviour intends no more by the "life eternal," in the 46th verſe of the xxvth of St. Matthew's goſpel, than he doth in the 34th verſe, by "the kingdom "prepared from the foundation of the world," (which it would be hard to prove) then an anſwer might be given, without all this labour, in this manner; *viz.* that as the Father hath appointed Chriſt a kingdom, ſo he hath alſo appointed his ſaints a kingdom; (See St. Luke, xxii. 29, 30. Rev. ii. 26, 27. iii. 21.) but as the kingdom which the Father hath given to Chriſt, as Mediator, and as Judge, ſhall *end*, when he ſhall have ſubdued all things, and put down all rule, and authority, and power; (See 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.) ſo, of conſequence, that kingdom which is given to the ſaints or overcomers, to ſubdue the nations, ſhall alſo *end*, when they

ſhall be all ſubdued, and brought to ſubmit. But as the glory of Chriſt ſhall not be *leſſened*, but *increaſed*, when God ſhall be ALL in ALL; ſo the happineſs of the ſaints ſhall be ſo far from ending, or being *diminiſhed*, at that period, that it ſhall then arrive at the ſummit of perfection; but ſhall never cloſe, nor decreaſe, while JEHOVAH endures.

Some time ago, a woman came to hear me, and I happened to mention in my ſermon, that Chriſt's mediatorial kingdom was called *everlaſting*, or *aionion*; but that *it muſt come to an end*, when the kingdom ſhould be delivered up to the Father, when he ſhould have put down all rule, and all authority and power. After ſermon, ſhe was aſked, how ſhe liked? She anſwered, "Not "at all: he ſays, The *everlaſting* kingdom "of Chriſt ſhall end; and I never heard of ſuch "a thing before in all my life; and I am ſure it "muſt be contrary to Scripture." The perſon who aſked her, told her, that there was ſuch a text ſomewhere, ſhe could not tell exactly where to find it. But the woman perſiſted in it, that there was no ſuch text; and went away, full of prejudice. Now, had this paſſage of Scripture been in the Book of the Revelations, it would not have been ſo much to be wondered at, that ſhe had never heard of it; but when we conſider, that this is expreſſed in that part of the 15th chapter of St. Paul's firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, which is in the *burial ſervice*—what ſhall we ſay?

Thus, if *Chriſt's* kingdom *ſhall end*, much more *Satan's!* If *rewards*, as ſuch, ſhall ceaſe; how much more *puniſhments!* If the *everlaſting* kingdom of the ſaints, which they ſhall poſſeſs *for ever and ever*, (See Dan. vii. 18, 27.) ſhall end, or be ſwallowed up in that kingdom of boundleſs love,

love, where God ſhall be ALL IN ALL; how much more, ſhall all ſin, pain, ſorrow, and death, ceaſe, and have no more a name in God's creation!

Friend. But ſuppoſing the doctrine of *endleſs miſery* to be a truth, how would you expect to find it expreſſed in the Bible?

Miniſter. I ſhould have a right to expect, in the firſt place, that there would be no promiſes in the Scripture to the contrary; no ſuch paſſages as theſe: "For I have ſworn by myſelf, the word "is gone out of my mouth in righteouſneſs, and "ſhall not return; that unto me every knee ſhall "bow, and every tongue ſhall ſwear;" Iſaiah, xlv. 23. Mind well, EVERY TONGUE SHALL SWEAR. Swearing allegiance, as every civilian will tell you, implies *pardon*, *reception*, and *protection*, on the part of the king; and a hearty *renouncing of rebellion*, *true ſubjection*, and *willing obedience*, on the part of the rebels. Kings of the earth may be deceived, but God cannot; he will never accept of any feigned ſubjection; and, therefore, all that ſwear, ſhall ſwear in truth and righteouſneſs; ſo ſhall rebellion ceaſe, and diſobedience be no more.

The apoſtle St. Paul, ſeems to quote this paſſage of Scripture with ſome variation, in his epiſtle to the Philippians, chap. ii. 9, 10, 11; where, ſpeaking of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the conſequences of the ſame, he ſays, "Where-"fore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and "given him a name, which is above every name; "that at (*or* in) the name of *Jeſus* every knee "ſhall bow, of things in heaven, and things in "earth, and things under the earth; and that "every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is "Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Now, this confeſſion appears to me to imply *a willing ſubjection*

ſubjection to the authority of the Saviour, brought about by the operation of the bleſſed Spirit; for the ſame apoſtle ſaith, "Wherefore, I give you "to underſtand, that no man, ſpeaking by the "Spirit of God, calleth Jeſus accurſed; and that "no man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by "the Holy Ghoſt," 1 Cor. xii. 3.

Then the argument, thrown into a ſyllogiſtical form, will run thus:

If every knee ſhall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; then ſhall all rebellion ceaſe.

But the firſt is true; therefore, alſo the laſt. If every tongue ſhall confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father; and no man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt; then ſhall the Holy Ghoſt work effectually in every man. As the major is proved, by Phil. ii. 11. and the minor, by 1 Cor. xii. 3, the concluſion muſt be evident to a demonſtration.

Friend. I acknowledge, that in the preſent ſtate, no man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt; but when they ſhall ſtand before his bar, they ſhall confeſs him Lord, to the glory of God the Father, *by force.*

Miniſter. But St. Paul ſpeaks generally, "that "no man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by "the Holy Ghoſt:" He does not mention *time* or *place*, but repreſents the matter impoſſible; beſides, every expreſſion here uſed, implies *a willing*, and not *a forced ſubjection*; as bowing *in the name* of *Jeſus*, and confeſſing him to be *Lord* of all, to the *glory* of *God* the *Father*.

Friend. But we are ſometimes told, that God is as much glorified by the eternal damnation of ſome, as by the eternal ſalvation of others.

Miniſter. I have, indeed, heard ſome aſſert the

the ſame: But as the glory of God is the ultimate end of all that he doth, we may properly aſk, why he ſhould take any pains to ſave mankind?

But, above all, there is one objection that may be brought againſt this idea, which is hard to anſwer; and that is, God hath ſaid, "For I have no plea- "ſure in the death of him that dieth, ſaith the "Lord GOD. Say unto them, As I live, ſaith the "Lord GOD, I have no pleaſure in the death of "the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his "way, and live: turn ye, turn ye, from your evil "ways; for why will ye die, O Houſe of Iſrael?" Ezek. xviii. 23. xxxiii. 11. It is evident to me, that God muſt take pleaſure in what glorifies his name; and as he hath ſworn, that he takes no pleaſure at all in the death of the wicked, it muſt be ſet down for a truth, that *puniſhment*, without having the reformation and ſubjection of rebels for its end, is unworthy of the Being we adore; and even now, it is called, "*his ſtrange work*," and "*his ſtrange* "*act*." But to proceed: If *endleſs* miſery were a truth, I ſhould not expect that the myſtery of the will of God, which he hath made known unto his choſen, according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf, would be, "That, in the "diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he might ga- "ther together in one, (*or* rehead) all things in "Chriſt, both which are in heaven, and which are "in earth," Epheſ. i. 9, 10. Far leſs ſhould I expect to find, that "It pleaſed the Father that in "him ſhould all fulneſs dwell; and, having made "peace by the blood of his croſs, by him, to recon- "cile all things to himſelf; by him, I ſay, whether "they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col. i. 19, 20. And I am not able to imagine, how St. John's viſion (Rev. v. 13.) could be juſt, if *endleſs damnation* is true, where he ſays, "And "every creature who is in heaven, and on the "earth,

" earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the " sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, " Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be " unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto " the Lamb, for ever and ever." In the nature of things, it appears impossible to me to believe these passages to be strictly and literally true, if *endless misery* be a truth: Therefore I say, that I should not expect any *intimations*, far less *absolute promises*, that God would destroy death, the works of the devil, and make all things new, with many others of the like nature.

We find it promised, that every knee shall bow: and lest some might say, that *every* knee, meant only *some* knees, it is explained by the inspired apostle, to mean *all* things in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth: and not only so, but every tongue shall *swear*, and *confess* that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father; which could not be, except all were reconciled to him, whether things in heaven, or things in earth: Wherefore, this is also promised; and, in consequence of their being subdued, humbled, made obedient, and reconciled, they shall be *reheaded in Christ*; never more to go astray, nor break that band of eternal union, which shall bind all together in one body, joined to one head; and all shall give never-ceasing praise to God and the Lamb, *world without end*.

As endless damnation appears to me to be *against the promises*, I cannot hold it as an article of my faith; but were there no promises or intimations to the contrary in Scripture, I should not require it to be threatened in any stronger terms than it is; I should believe it as a truth, though I might not be able, at present, to see the propriety and equity thereof; I should never suffer my weak reason to gainsay Divine Revelation: But my difficulty arises from these express promises of God, which com-

pose

poſe ſo great a part of that book which is given us as a rule of faith and practice; and which promiſes expreſſly aſſert a future ſtate of things beyond ſin, ſorrow, pain, and death of every kind; when all things ſhall be made new; and death, the laſt enemy of God, Chriſt, and man, ſhall be deſtroyed, ſwallowed up in victory; and ſin, which is its ſting, ſhall be no more in exiſtence; and tears ſhall be all wiped away, from all faces.

But, though I have acknowledged that I ſhould not dare to diſpute the doctrine of *endleſs damnation*, unleſs God had given *intimations*, and even *promiſes*, to the contrary; ſince I find ſeveral dreadful threatenings in Scripture, in which the word *aionion*, or *everlaſting*, is joined with the puniſhment of the wicked; yet, a very little attention will ſhew us, that the felicity of the righteous is promiſed in much ſtronger language, than the miſery of the wicked is threatened, in the Scriptures.

I remark, in the firſt place, that the word *aionion*, rendered *everlaſting*, or *eternal*, is uſed much oftener in St. John's goſpel alone, to expreſs the continuance of the life, or well-being, of the righteous, than it is uſed in the whole Bible, to expreſs the miſery of the wicked; and this remark is ſtrengthend by obſerving, that he never once uſes the word in his whole goſpel, nor in his epiſtles, to ſet forth the duration of puniſhment. See St. John, iii. 15, 16, 36. iv. 14. v. 24. vi. 27, 40, 47, 54, 68. x. 28. xii. 25, 50. xvii. ver. 2, 3. in all which paſſages, the word *aionion* is uſed to expreſs the continuance of the well-being of the righteous.

But, not to inſiſt on this: I obſerve, that there are many ſtronger expreſſions (even in our tranſlation) to ſet forth the well-being of the righteous, than any that are uſed as connected with the miſery of the wicked. Iſaiah, xlv. 17. we read, "Iſrael

" shall be saved in JEHOVAH, with an *everlasting* " salvation; ye shall not be ashamed, nor con- " founded, *world without end.*" But where do we read, that the misery of the wicked shall have *no end?* The word *endless*, or *world without end*, is never once used by our translators, to express the eternity of punishment, in the whole Bible.

We read, in 1 Pet. i. 4. of " an inheritance, *in-* " *corruptible*, and undefiled; and that *fadeth not* " *away*, reserved in heaven:" and in chap. v. 4. of " a crown of glory, that *fadeth not away:*" and, Heb. xii. 28. of " a kingdom, which cannot be moved:" And our blessed Saviour's words are remarkably strong upon this subject, in many places; as, in St. Luke's gospel, chap. xx. 35, 36. where he says, " But they who shall be accounted worthy " to obtain that world, and the (first) resurrection " from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in " marriage: neither *can they die any more:* for " they are equal unto the angels; and are the chil- " dren of God, being the children of the resur- " rection:" And in St. John, x. 27, 28, 29. we read thus: " My sheep hear my voice, and I " know them, and they follow me: and I give " unto them eternal life: and they shall *never* " *perish*, neither shall any pluck them out of my " hand. My Father, who gave them me, is " greater than all; and none is able to pluck " them out of My Father's hand." In chap. xi. 25, 26. Christ says, " I am the resurrection and " the life: he that believeth in me, though he " were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever " liveth and believeth in me, shall *never die.*" And, in chap. vi. 50. he says, " This is the bread " that cometh down from heaven, that a man " may eat thereof, and *not die.*" And he expresses the perpetuity of heavenly bliss, and of our enjoyment of the same, by advising us, saying, " Lay

" Lay up for yourſelves treaſures in heaven; " where neither moth nor ruſt doth corrupt, and " where thieves do not break through nor ſteal. " Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's " good pleaſure to give you the kingdom. Sell " that ye have, and give alms: provide your- " ſelves bags which wax not old, a treaſure in " the heavens that faileth not; where no thief " approacheth, neither moth corrupteth," St. Matth. vi. 20. and St. Luke, xii. 32, 33. This is that which St. Paul calleth " a better and an en- " during ſubſtance," Heb. x. 34. But what ſhall I ſay of the apoſtle's words, 2 Cor. iv. 17? " For " our light affliction, which is but for a moment, " worketh for us, *kath hyperbolen eis hyperbolen aio-* " *nos baros doxes katergazetai emin*: a glory, exceed- " ing *aionion*, or eternal, *to an exceſs*." Here is an hyperbole upon an hyperbole; beyond eternal; a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory.

But it is not ſo much by the different words made uſe of to denote the permanency of the feli- city of the righteous, from thoſe which are uſed to expreſs the duration of the miſery of the wicked, that I judge of the *continuance of the one* beyond the other; ſo much as from the different ſources from whence they flow, and of their different natures.

The happineſs of thoſe who are reconciled to God, ariſes from their union to Chriſt; in which if they continue grounded and ſettled during this preſent life, wherein they paſs through ſo many ſore trials, the union will become ſo permanent, as that it will be impoſſible to diſſolve it; and the very nature of things ſhews, that if we abide firm to the end, through all difficulties, and overcome all thoſe things that would ſeek to ſeparate us from Chriſt, when we come into that ſtate where we ſhall meet with no more temptations, nor any

thing that hath the leaſt tendency to draw our minds from God, we muſt, of conſequence, remain attached, or united, to him, while we have an exiſtence. This doctrine was known to David; and, therefore, he ſaid, "While I live, will I "praiſe JEHOVAH; I will ſing praiſes unto my "God, while I have any being," Pſal. cxlvi. 2. civ. 33. It may be proved, that the union ſhall continue between Chriſt and his faithful ones after this life, and ſhall become indiſſoluble; and that neither "tribulation, nor diſtreſs, nor per-"ſecution, nor famine, nor nakedneſs, nor peril, "nor ſword; neither death, nor life, nor angels, "nor principalities, nor powers, nor things "preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor "depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able "to ſeparate us (who abide in him) from the love "of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord." See Rom. viii. 35—39. See alſo St. John, xv. 4, 5, 7, 9, 10. 1 John, ii. 24—28.

The never-ending continuance of the life, or ſtate of well-being of the righteous, may be certainly inferred, with the greateſt eaſe, from the continuance of the life of Chriſt; who is made an high-prieſt, "not after the law of a carnal command-"ment, but after the power of an endleſs life," Heb. vii. 16. And he hath expreſly declared, "Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo," St. John xiv. 19. Thus, as long as the cauſe remains, the effect muſt continue; but the cauſe, even the life of Chriſt, muſt undoubtedly continue to endleſs periods; therefore alſo, the effect, or the life of thoſe who are joined to him in an indiſſoluble union, ſhall continue. The apoſtle Paul underſtood logic as well as any in our days: and he thus reaſons upon this glorious truth; "The Spirit itſelf bear-"eth witneſs with our ſpirits, that we (who are led by the Spirit of God, and have received the ſpi-

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rit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father) "are the children of God: And if children, then "heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Chriſt: "if ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that we may be "alſo glorified together," Rom. viii. 16, 17.

Now, as Chriſt, the principal heir, cannot be diſinherited; ſo, neither can thoſe who are joint heirs with him. The Holy Spirit is given us as the earneſt of our inheritance, and to ſeal us to the day of redemption, 2 Cor. v. 5. Epheſ. i. 13, 14. and iv. 30. Chriſt is the head, and the overcomers thro' the blood of the Lamb, are the members of his body, and ſhall inherit all things; he will be their God, and they ſhall be his children: he is their life, and he "will make them pillars in the temple of "God, and they ſhall go no more out," Rev. iii. 12. St. Paul ſays, "When Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall "appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in "glory," Col. iii. 4. And St. John ſays, "Be"hold what manner of love the Father hath be"ſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons "of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, "becauſe it knew him not. Beloved, now are we "the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear "what we ſhall be: but we know, that when he "ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall "ſee him as he is," 1 John iii. 1, 2. Thus, we are ſure, from the Scriptures, and from the nature of things, that thoſe who are drawn by the Father, united to the Son, ſealed by the Holy Ghoſt, willingly chooſe the Lord for their portion, and conſtantly adhere to him to the end, ſhall never be ſeparated from him in the future ages; for he himſelf ſaith, "As the living Father hath ſent "me, and I live by the Father; ſo he that eateth "me, even he ſhall live by me," St. John, vi. 57. And as Chriſt is the great attracting loadſtone, that ſhall finally draw all things to him; it is evi-

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dent, that he will preſerve *for ever*, thoſe whom he hath thoroughly drawn to himſelf, and who have adhered to him through the time of trial. Thus is the life eternal of the righteous, or their endleſs ſtate of well-being, expreſſed in much ſtronger language than the miſery of the wicked; and, moreover, has its foundation in the union between Chriſt and his church, and in the nature of things.

Friend. But if the Spirit of God dwelling in us, and thereby cauſing us to adhere to Chriſt, and to follow him through all trials, makes our union to him ſo perfect, that nothing ſhall be able to ſeparate us from him to all eternity; ſince we are confirmed in habits of goodneſs by free choice, and by oft repeated exerciſes; why, by the ſame rule, ſhall not the miſery of the wicked be *endleſs*, ſeeing that they have choſen and adhered to evil through life, and by conſtant practice are confirmed therein? Evil is grown up to a body in them; and it appears to me as difficult to reform and bring them off from their vicious habits, as it would be to draw the ſaints in light from their adherence to virtue and goodneſs.

Miniſter. Your reaſoning would be concluſive, upon the ſuppoſition that *there are two eternal principles*, viz. *good* and *evil*; if it can be proved, that evil is coexiſtent with goodneſs, that it hath always been: then, the abſolute eternity of ſin and miſery may be eaſily inferred. This is the true foundation of *endleſs miſery*, and it came from the Pagan theology: The Heathens believed in *two eternal principles*, ever warring againſt each other, and neither fully prevailing; that men had the liberty of enliſting under which they pleaſed; and that thoſe who in life choſe virtue, ſhould enjoy endleſs felicity; while thoſe who choſe, and adhered to vice, ſhould eternally remain under its dominion, and of conſequence be always miſerable. Thus, the infernal

fernal deities being judged by the poor Pagans to be as eternal as the good gods, and more powerful; they ſacrificed more to the evil principle than to the good, out of fear, and to appeaſe the anger of thoſe abhorred, malevolent agents; hence, the frequency of human ſacrifices.

Now, when the Chriſtian religion triumphed over Paganiſm in the Roman empire, many of the philoſophers embraced and profeſſed it, but withal, retained many of their Pagan notions; among which was the *eternity* of theſe two oppoſite principles: hence aroſe the ancient ſect of the Manichees, who believed not only the eternal exiſtence of two contrary eternal Gods, one good and the other evil; but alſo, that all viſible things were created by the devil; and upon this principle, they might argue the univerſality of damnation, with as much eaſe and certainty, as we, upon the contrary, may argue the certainty of the univerſal Reſtoration, according to that glorious promiſe of God, Iſaiah, lvii. 16, 17, 18, 19. "For I will not contend for ever, neither "will I be always wroth: for the ſpirit ſhould "fail before me, and the ſouls which I have "made. For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs was "I wroth, and ſmote him: I hid me, and was "wroth; and he went on frowardly, in the way "of his heart. I have ſeen his ways, and will "heal him: I will lead him alſo, and reſtore com-"forts unto him, and to his mourners. I create "the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace, to him that "is far off, and to him that is near, ſaith JEHO-"VAH; and I will heal him."

Thoſe who venture to contradict their Maker, and ſay, that *he will contend for ever, and be always wroth*; ought to give as good a reaſon, at leaſt, why he *will*, as he hath given why he *will not*; and, conſequently, muſt prove him not to be the Father of all ſpirits, and the Creator of all ſouls: If, therefore,

therefore, it can be demonſtrated, that Satan is an eternal, ſelf-exiſtent, immutable, evil being, and that he hath created all, or a part of mankind, (as ſome aſſerted formerly, and as I myſelf have heard lately) or that he hath drawn ſome of God's creatures into ſuch an union with himſelf, that they cannot be ſeparated from him; and that he will maintain his crown, throne, and kingdom, in oppoſition to God, to all endleſs duration; then, and not till then, may the *eternity* of ſin and miſery be concluded, from the nature of things, with equal eaſe and certainty, as the perfection and happineſs of the ſaints.

But, if the kingdom of evil, and all the works of ſin, Satan, and darkneſs, ſhall be totally deſtroyed by Chriſt, and all things ſhall be reheaded in him, who is the head of all principality and power, as well as of every man: See Epheſians, i. 10. Col. ii. 10. 1 Cor. xi. 3. If every knee ſhall bow, and tongue ſhall ſwear, and all things, whether in heaven or in earth, or under the earth, ſhall confeſs that he is Lord; and all things, whether in heaven or in earth, ſhall be reconciled to him: See Iſaiah, xlv. 23. Phil. ii. 10. Col. i. 20. And all kingdoms (not excepting that of the prince of the power of the air) ſhall be broken and deſtroyed by the kingdom of Chriſt, which ſhall itſelf be yielded up into the kingdom of bounleſs love, where *judgment* ſhall be no more: What ſhall we ſay of that doctrine, that teaches us the *endleſs duration of evil?* So far is the *endleſs ſin* and miſery of the wicked from being inferred from the *endleſs* holineſs and felicity of the righteous, in the kingdom of the Father, that every proof and demonſtration of the latter, concludes equally againſt the former.

One of the firſt arguments that ever began to take hold of my mind, and to bring me to think

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ſeriouſly of the ſyſtem of the Reſtoration, was, what I read in a little book upon the ſubject called, *The Everlaſting Goſpel*, &c. and is there thus expreſſed.

" It is as impoſſible that there ſhould be two end-
" leſs contrary things, as that there ſhould be
" two real contrary deities, a good God and a
" bad one, or two ſorts of contrary creatures,
" both of truly divine original, ſome being made
" good by God, and others bad. For an abſo-
" lute and merely infinite duration, which has
" neither beginning nor end, is according to the
" confeſſion of all divines, yea of every reaſonable
" man, a property peculiar to the uncreated Be-
" ing only. But ſuch an infinite duration, which,
" although it has a beginning, yet ſhall have no
" end, can only be the property of thoſe creatures,
" that are of divine original. For as theſe, ac-
" cording to the language of the ſcripture, are of
" divine origin, and therefore are rooted in God,
" or in his almighty creating power, which has
" no beginning, they can alſo be everlaſting,
" their exiſtence or duration can alſo be without
" end in God. But whatſoever has not its eter-
" nal root in God, or in his eternal creating
" power, but is ſprung up in the creature in this
" world, by its voluntary turning away from
" God, and againſt his holy will, and conſe-
" quently is an abomination and diſpleaſure to
" the Moſt High, and is only ſuffered by him,
" ſuch as ſin, and the puniſhment depending
" thereon, theſe things cannot poſſibly be of an
" abſolute endleſs exiſtence and duration, or re-
" main ſo long as GOD ſhall exiſt; but muſt
" of neceſſity once ceaſe and be annihilated. For
" as God is a Being to thoſe creatures which he
" created good, and which exiſt through his will,
" wherein they may ſubſiſt and be preſerved with-

" out end ; ſo he is on the contrary, to iniquity " and ſin, (which againſt his will, is ſprung up " in and ſticks to the creatures) a conſuming fire, " whereby all ſin and perverſeneſs in the creatures " muſt be at laſt conſumed, annihilated, and ſe- " parated from them in the higheſt degree, in or- " der to reſtore them to their primitive purity ; " in the ſame manner as the fire does not conſume " and deſtroy the gold, but only the droſs, and " that which is impure."

We will now ſtate ſome of the arguments in favour of the *endleſs* continuance of the happineſs of the ſaints, in the kingdom of their Father ; and thoſe which prove that the ſtate of miſery ſhall come to an end.

Chriſt hath promiſed, that the happineſs of the ſaints ſhall have no end ; becauſe *his life* ſhall have no end, and he is *their life*.

The miſery of the wicked ſhall end, becauſe the kingdom of evil ſhall end.

The power of God ſtands engaged to preſerve and keep thoſe who commit themſelves to him ; and thus their union with him ſhall always continue.

The ſame is engaged to deſtroy that covenant with death, and that agreement with hell, whereby ſinners are held in ſubjection to Satan, and thus to take the prey from the mighty, and the captives from the terrible.

The ſubjects of Chriſt are his natural ſubjects ; he is their rightful ſovereign : but Satan's ſubjects are ſlaves, led captive by him at his will ; he is an uſurper, and all that are in bondage to him belong to Chriſt, who will finally draw them all to himſelf.

Thoſe that are in bliſs ſhall be eternally attracted by him, and ſhall always chooſe that which is good ; but when evil is broken, its influence ſhall

ſhall no more prevail over thoſe that are captivated by it; and they ſhall feel the conſequences of ſin in ſuch a manner as to loathe it; and they ſhall heartily return, and ſwear allegiance to their rightful King.

There ſhall be no influence to draw the ſaints in bliſs from Chriſt, and thereby diſſolve his kingdom; but all the influence of God and goodneſs, ſhall tend to diſſolve the kingdom of darkneſs, and to put an end to the thraldom and miſery of its unhappy ſlaves.

Thus, I might go on with a long train of arguments upon this ſubject; but theſe may ſuffice.

Friend. Your arguments would ſeem very concluſive, for the entire ſubjection of all things, if you could prove that the word ALL, intends literally and mathematically, *the whole*, without *exception*; but this, I doubt, will be difficult for you to do, as you muſt know, that it is very frequently uſed in common language for *a part*, and ſometimes for *only a ſmall part of mankind.*

Miniſter. I acknowledge, this is the caſe in common converſation, and in ſuch parts of the ſacred hiſtory where we are in no danger of being miſled by it, being well informed by the context, or ſome other paſſages, or from the nature, or from the circumſtances of the facts, that we muſt take it in a limited ſenſe; but I do not recollect any paſſage, *where any point of doctrine* is ſpoken of, in which the word ALL is uſed in that *uncertain* and *indeterminate* manner: and it is neceſſary that it ſhould not be uſed in that way, *in matters of importance*; becauſe we might be led into confuſion and great uncertainty thereby; not knowing whether to underſtand it *univerſally*, or *partially*. Wherefore, I lay down this plain rule; *viz.* When the word ALL is uſed in any paſſage of Scripture, and we are not neceſſarily obliged, either by the con-

text or ſome other text, or the nature and circumſtances of the caſe, to underſtand it *partially*; and eſpecially, where any important point of doctrine is ſpoken of, we are always to underſtand it *univerſally*, *without exception*.

Friend. But can you prove from the writings of the apoſtles, that they uſed the word ALL in this large and univerſal ſenſe?

Miniſter. Yes, my friend, very eaſily, and in the moſt unexceptionable manner. Hear what the author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews ſays upon this matter: "Thou haſt put ALL *things* in ſub-"jection under his feet: for in that he put ALL "in ſubjection under him; he left *nothing that is* "*not put under him*," Heb. ii. 8.

It is evident, that the apoſtle's reaſoning would be very inaccurate, if not entirely falſe, upon the ſuppoſition that ALL *things* did not intend ALL, in the largeſt ſenſe: for how would this concluſion naturally and neceſſarily follow, "For in that he "put ALL in ſubjection under him, he left *nothing* "not put under him;" unleſs it be premiſed, that ALL is uſed in the *univerſal* ſenſe of the word?

Friend. But hath not the ſame apoſtle made an exception, when he uſes the word ALL, in ſome other of his writings?

Miniſter. Yes, truly; but it is ſuch an exception as juſtifies this ſenſe of the word, more than a thouſand arguments: "For he hath put ALL "*things* under his feet; but when he ſaith, ALL "*things* are put under him, it is manifeſt, that *he* "*is excepted which did put* ALL *things under him*," 1 Cor. xv. 27. Here God the Father being alone excepted, proves all other beings to be included in the words ALL *things*; and that in ſo convincing a manner, that I am aſtoniſhed that I did not perceive it long before I did.

Friend.

Friend. It is true, that nothing can be plainer, than that ALL *things*, in theſe places, muſt mean ALL beings, except God; but then, perhaps, St. Paul only meant, that they ſhould be ſubject *to his controul*, and not brought *willingly to obey:* If you can prove this point as clearly as you have the other, and from the ſame authority, it will ſeem to put the matter with me beyond diſpute.

Miniſter. This is very eaſily done; for it is univerſally acknowledged by all Chriſtians, that all things are now, and have ever been, ſubject to his controul; for when he was upon earth, in his loweſt ſtate of humiliation, even the unclean ſpirits, the moſt rebellious of beings, obeyed his word; which made thoſe who ſaw his miracles cry, with amazement, "What thing is this? what "new doctrine is this? for with authority com- "mandeth he even the unclean ſpirits, and they "obey him," St. Mark, i. 27. The devils obeyed him univerſally, in whatever he commanded them; and could not enter into the ſwine without his permiſſion; and how diſagreeable ſoever his words were to them, they were *forced* to comply, without daring to complain; yea, they frequently ſeemed like humble ſuppliants; and once we read, they went ſo far as to adjure our bleſſed Lord not to torment them: See St. Mark, v. 7. The winds, waves, fiſhes, all obeyed him; all diſeaſes, and even death itſelf, heard his voice, and departed at his bidding; and to his diſciples he ſaid, "All power is given unto me, in heaven and in "earth," Matth. xxviii. 18. and certainly now, he is at "the right hand of God, angels, and "authorities, and powers, are made ſubject unto "him," 1 Pet. iii. 22. God hath exalted him "far above all principality, and power, and "might, and dominion, and every name that is "named; not only in this *age*, (for ſo I render

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" the word *aioni*) but alſo in that which is to " come; and put all things under his feet, and " gave him to be the head over all things to the " church," Epheſ. i. 21, 22. But, as though the apoſtle had known that the ſenſe would be diſputed, he hath ſaid, " But now we ſee *not yet* " *all things put under him*," Heb. ii. 8. All things were ſubject to his controul, *even on earth*; and they cannot be leſs ſo, now he is exalted to heaven, to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; and yet, many years after his aſcenſion, the apoſtle ſays, " But now we ſee " not *yet* all things put under him;" by which he muſt certainly mean their being *willingly ſubject* unto him; for, in all other ſenſes, all things are *now* put under him, in the moſt unlimited manner, as we have ſeen already. But the apoſtle goes on to tell how far the important work is accompliſhed, and that a ſure foundation is laid for its entire completion; ſaying, " But we ſee Jeſus, who was made " a little lower than the angels, for the ſuffering " of death, crowned with glory and honour, that " he, by the grace of God, ſhould taſte death for " ALL;" (for ſo the word *pantos* ought to be rendered). There was anciently a manuſcript in uſe, in which the words were *choris Theou* inſtead of *chariti Theou*, that is, *for all*, EXCEPT GOD. And there is little doubt of its being the true ſenſe; becauſe St. Paul makes the ſame exception, with reſpect to thoſe who are put under Chriſt, as we have before noted, 1 Cor. xv. 27.

Then the apoſtle adds, " For it became him, " for whom are *all things*, and by whom are *all* " *things*, in bringing many ſons unto glory, to " make the Captain of their ſalvation perfect " through ſufferings," Heb. ii. 9, 10.

Inſtead of the word *all* intending only *a part*, we find, in ſeveral places, that the word *many* intends *all*, as in Rom. v. 15, 16, 19. " For if " through

" through the offence of one, *many* be dead; " much more the grace of God, and the gift by " grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath " abounded unto *many*. The free gift is of *many* " offences unto justification. For, as by one man's " disobedience *many* were made sinners; so, by " the obedience of one, shall *many* be made " righteous." Isaiah, liii. 11, 12. " By his " knowledge shall my righteous servant justify " *many* (or *the* many) for he shall bear their ini- " quities. And he bare the sins of *many*, and " made intercession for the transgressors." These *many* are called *all*, in the 6th verse: " *All* we, " like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned " every one to his own way: and JEHOVAH hath " laid on him the iniquity of us *all*."

But, to return to our subject: St. Paul assures us, that though *all things*, without exception, are put under him, in *one* sense; yet, in *another*, he says, " But now we see not yet *all things* put under " him." But he leaves us not in the dark about the matter; but speaks of that effectual " work- " ing, whereby he is able even to subdue *all things* " unto himself," Phil. iii. 21. " And when *all* " *things* shall be *subdued* unto himself, then shall the " Son also himself be subject unto him that put *all* " *things* under him, that God may be ALL IN " ALL," 1 Cor. xv. 28. Here we plainly find, a very necessary distinction between all things being *put under him*; and all things being *subdued unto him* the former is already done, in the fullest manner; and the latter *shall* be as perfectly and as fully accomplished, in due time: " Because the creation itself shall be delivered from " the bondage of corruption, into the glorious li- " berty of the children of God. For we know, " that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth " in pain together, until now," Rom. viii. 21, 22.

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Though what hath already been ſpoken, may ſeem more than enough to prove the point reſpecting the word *all*; yet there is one paſſage more, full to the purpoſe, that I would not omit; it being, of itſelf, fully ſufficient to ſettle the diſpute for ever :—The apoſtle, ſpeaking of Chriſt, ſaith, "Who is the image of the inviſible God, the firſt-"born of *every creature:* for by him were *all things* "created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, "viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones, "or dominions, or principalities, or powers; *all* "*things* were created by him, and for him: and "he is before *all things*, and by him *all things* "conſiſt. And he is the head of the body, the "church; who is the beginning, the firſt-born "from the dead: that in *all things* he might have "the pre-eminence. For it pleaſed the Father, "that in him ſhould *all* fulneſs dwell; and hav-"ing made peace through the blood of his croſs, "by him, to reconcile *all things* unto himſelf; by "him, I ſay, whether they be things in earth, "or things in heaven," Col. i. 15—20.

As the word *all* is generally acknowledged to be uſed in its moſt extenſive ſenſe, in every place in this paragraph, except the laſt, there is no reaſon to be given why the apoſtle ſhould change the ſenſe of the word, without giving us the leaſt notice of it; and, indeed, it would be very unkind, if not unfair, for him thus to do; as it would tend to miſlead us, in a matter of very great importance.

Friend. I hope that I am not ſo attached to my own opinions as to be unwilling to hear and conſider what may be advanced againſt them; but the doctrine of *endleſs damnation* has been ſo generally conſidered as a moſt important article of faith by all denominations, that I can by no means think of giving it up, unleſs your are able to

to eſtabliſh the contrary ſyſtem upon the moſt ſolid ground, and anſwer all the ſcriptural objections fairly, that have been, or that can be brought againſt it; for I muſt have all my doubts ſolved, before I can think of believing ſuch a ſtrange doctrine as this appears to me.

Miniſter. I moſt heartily commend your prudence and ſincerity: *I* took the ſame reſolution; and would never receive this view, till I could anſwer all objections to my own ſatisfaction: and if you are diſpoſed to enquire farther at another opportunity, I ſhall be happy in giving you all the aſſiſtance in my power.

END OF THE FIRST DIALOGUE.

DIALOGUE II.

Friend. GOOD day to you, ſir, I was juſt paſſing by, and if you have a little time to ſpare, I ſhould be happy to have ſome farther diſcourſe with you, reſpecting your ſentiments; for although I cannot fall in with your views, yet I am convinced, that your mind is upright in the matter, and that you do not diſagree with your brethren for the ſake of differing, but for what you believe to be truth.

Miniſter. I have this to ſay, (and I can with truth declare it) that I never ſhould have diſſented from my brethren, had they only given me the liberty of enjoying that natural right, of freely thinking for myſelf in matters of religion. I ſincerely wiſh to live and die in unity with all that love God and keep his commandments; and I ſhould never have troubled the world with my ſentiments, had not great pains been taken to repreſent me as a heretic, and my ſentiments dangerous to mankind: This was done to prevent people from hearing what I had to ſay in other matters. I was therefore, in a ſort, compelled to ſit down and anſwer all the objections that were brought againſt the truth I believed; which anſwers, drawn (as I truſt) fairly from the Scriptures, have ſatisfied many who have read what I then wrote upon the ſubject.

Friend. I never ſaw your anſwers to objections in print: but in our laſt converſation, you gave ſuch anſwers to many queſtions, as ſeemed to convince

vince me that much more might be ſaid in favour of the general Reſtoration than I formerly imagined: But I have a number of objections remaining, which appear to me unanſwerable; and which I beg leave to ſtate you in the plaineſt manner.

Miniſter. Do, my dear friend; you will give me pleaſure, by being free and open upon this ſubject: propoſe all your objections, in the ſtrongeſt manner poſſible, and I will give you ſuch anſwers as have ſatisfied me in the matter; and I beg leave to aſſure you, that no light, trifling, or forced anſwer, far leſs a manifeſt evaſion, would ſatisfy my mind upon this awful and intereſting ſubject; and if what I believe is not capable of a ſcriptural defence, I ſhall endeavour to quit the ground as ſpeedily as poſſible.

Friend. The words of our Saviour, recorded by St. Mark, chap. ix. 43—49, form a very ſerious, and to me an unanſwerable objection againſt the univerſal Reſtoration.

" And if thy hand offend thee (*or* cauſe thee to " offend) cut it off: it is better for thee to enter " into life maimed, than having two hands, to go " into hell; into the fire that never ſhall be " quenched (*or* that is unquenchable): where their " worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. " And if thy foot offend thee, (*or* cauſe thee to of- " fend) cut it off: it is better for thee to enter " halt into life, than having two feet, to be caſt " into hell, into the fire that never ſhall be quench- " ed (*or* that is unquenchable): where their worm " dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And " if thine eye offend thee, (*or* cauſe thee to of- " fend) pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter " into the kingdom of God with one eye, than " having two eyes, to be caſt into hell fire: where " their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. " For every one ſhall be ſalted with fire, and every " ſacrifice ſhall be ſalted with ſalt."

Here our Lord repeats five times, that "the "fire is not, or never ſhall be quenched, or is "unquenchable;" words of nearly ſimilar meaning: Three times he ſpeaks of hell, as a *place* where "their worm dieth not:" and, to ſhew the perpetuity of the ſufferings of the miſerable, he ſays, "For every one ſhall be ſalted with fire;" *i. e.* preſerved by the fire, as ſalt preſerves meat. Theſe are the objections from this paſſage, briefly ſtated: Are you able to anſwer them fairly, without any evaſion, from the authority of Scripture?

Miniſter. This is certainly a moſt terrible paſſage, and deſerves to be conſidered particularly.

There is no doubt but Jeſus Chriſt had his eye upon that paſſage in Iſaiah, lxvi. 24.—"And they "ſhall go forth, and look upon the carcaſes of "the men that have tranſgreſſed againſt me: for "their worm ſhall not die, neither ſhall their fire "be quenched; and they ſhall be an abhorring "unto all fleſh."

It will be of uſe to us to underſtand when this prophecy ſhall be fulfilled: It ſhall be when the Children of Iſrael ſhall return, and be ſettled in their own land; and their enemies ſhall come againſt them, and ſhall be deſtroyed, and their carcaſes ſhall fall upon the mountains of Iſrael, and ſhall be a prey to the fowls of heaven, and their fleſh ſhall be devoured by worms, which ſhall not die, till they have eaten and entirely deſtroyed their bodies.

"Thou ſhalt fall upon the mountains of Iſrael, "thou and all thy bands, and the people that is "with thee; I will give thee to the ravenous birds "of every ſort, and to the beaſts of the field, to be "devoured. Thou ſhalt fall upon the open field: "for I have ſpoken it, ſaith Adonai JEHOVAH. "And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that I will "give unto Gog a place there of graves in Iſrael, the

" the valley of the paſſengers on the eaſt of the ſea:
" and it ſhall ſtop the noſes of the paſſengers; and
" there ſhall they bury Gog, and all his multi-
" tude: and they ſhall call it, The Valley of Ham-
" mon-Gog. And ſeven months ſhall the Houſe
" of Iſrael be burying of them, that they may
" cleanſe the land." (See Ezek. xxxix. 4, 5, 11, 12.) " And it ſhall come to paſs, that every
" one that is left of all the nations which came
" againſt Jeruſalem, ſhall even go up, from year
" to year, to worſhip the King, JEHOVAH, of
" Hoſts, and to keep the feaſt of tabernacles."
Zech. xiv. 16. " And it ſhall come to paſs,
" that from one new moon to another, and from
" one ſabbath to another, ſhall all fleſh come to
" worſhip before me, ſaith JEHOVAH." Iſaiah, lxvi. 21. And they that ſhall come up to Jeruſalem, to worſhip the Lord, during the time that theſe bodies ſhall lie in the open field, ſhall go forth, and behold them in a ſtate of putrefaction, a prey to worms; and all the nations of the earth ſhall ſee God's judgments executed upon thoſe who dare to rebel againſt him, by making war againſt the Lamb, and againſt his army. Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 19.

It is alſo intimated by Ezekiel, that a fire ſhall be kindled, to burn their weapons of war, &c. which ſhall laſt for ſome time. Hear his words: " And they that dwell in the cities of
" Iſrael ſhall go forth, and ſhall ſet on fire and
" burn the weapons, both the ſhields and the
" bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the
" hand-ſtaves and the ſpears; and they ſhall
" burn them with fire ſeven years: ſo that they
" ſhall take no wood out of the field, neither cut
" down any out of the foreſts; for they ſhall burn
" the weapons with fire." See Ezek. xxxix. 9, 10.

Thus have I endeavoured to give the plain ſenſe

ſenſe of the text to which our Lord alluded; and I have not the ſmalleſt doubt of its being hereafter literally fulfilled.

I will now endeavour to give what appears to me the meaning of the text before us:—Chriſt threatened that thoſe who would not deny themſelves, and cut off thoſe things that led them into ſin, ſhould hereafter ſuffer infinitely greater inconveniencies, by being caſt into hell fire. And, Oh! who can conceive how dreadful a portion is threatened to ſome tranſgreſſors! that they "ſhall "drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which "is poured out without mixture, into the cup "of his indignation; and ſhall be tormented with "fire and brimſtone, in the preſence of the holy "angels, and in the preſence of the Lamb: And "the ſmoke of their torment aſcendeth up ages "of ages; and they have no reſt, day nor night." Rev. xiv. 10, 11.

Thus, as the enemies of God, who ſhall be deſtroyed near Jeruſalem, ſhall have their carcaſes expoſed, full of worms, and be an abhorring unto all that behold them; ſo thoſe who are caſt into the burning lake, ſhall be publickly expoſed to ſhame, and ſhall ſuffer openly for their crimes; and the ſmoke of their torment ſhall aſcend up *continually*, during thoſe ages that the lake of fire, or the ſecond death, ſhall continue.

But when I conſider, that this terraqueous globe itſelf is probably to become the lake of fire, when the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat; and yet after that dreadful ſcene is paſt, the earth itſelf ſhall be renewed, and become the habitation of righteouſneſs; I can hardly have any doubts; but all the rational part of the creation, "ſhall be de-"livered from the bondage of corruption, into "the glorious liberty of the "children of God." See Rom. viii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Thus

Thus, if the lake of fire, or ſecond death itſelf, ſhall be deſtroyed, ſhall ceaſe, and be no more; there is an *end* to *tormenting pain*; though, perhaps, ſuch *inward reflections*, ſhall continue for ſome time longer, (if not to eternity) which, though they ſhall tend exceedingly to increaſe the love of God in the ſouls thus delivered, ſhall fill them with ſhame, ſimilar, or perhaps more pungent than we feel here on earth, when we are melted under a deep ſenſe of our manifold tranſgreſſions, and of the pardoning love of God at the ſame time.——This ſeems to me to be the meaning of ſuch paſſages as theſe:

" O my God, make them like a wheel; as the " ſtubble before the wind. As the fire burneth " the wood, and as the flame ſetteth the mountains " on fire; ſo perſecute them with thy tempeſt, and " make them afraid with thy ſtorm. Fill their " faces with ſhame, that they may ſeek thy name, " O JEHOVAH. Let them be confounded and " troubled forever; yea, let them be put to ſhame, " and periſh: That—(our tranſlators have added the word *men*, but the ſenſe determines that the addition ſhould be)—" *they* may know that thou " whoſe name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Moſt " High over all the earth," Pſal. lxxxiii. 13—18.

" The wiſe ſhall inherit glory, but ſhame ſhall " be the promotion of fools," Prov. iii. 35.

" They ſhall be greatly aſhamed, for they ſhall " not proſper; their everlaſting confuſion ſhall " never be forgotten," Jer. xx. 11. xxxiii. 40.

" They ſhall be aſhamed, and alſo confounded, " all of them: they ſhall go to confuſion together, " that are makers of idols," Iſa. xlv. 16. " And " all that are incenſed againſt him, (JEHOVAH) " ſhall be aſhamed," verſe 24.

" For thus ſaith Adonai JEHOVAH; I will even " deal with thee as thou haſt done, which haſt de-

" ſpiſed

" ſpiſed the oath in breaking the covenant. Ne-
" vertheleſs, I will remember my covenant with
" thee in the days of thy youth, and I will eſtabliſh
" unto thee an everlaſting covenant. Then thou
" ſhalt remember thy ways, and be aſhamed, when
" thou ſhalt receive thy ſiſters, thine elder and thy
" younger (*viz.* Samaria and Sodom); and I will
" give them unto thee for daughters, but not by
" thy covenant. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant
" with thee, and thou ſhalt know that I am JEHO-
" VAH: That thou mayeſt remember, and be con-
" founded, and never open thy mouth any more,
" becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified to-
" wards thee, for all that thou haſt done, ſaith
" Adonai JEHOVAH," Ezek. xvi. 59—63.

" Then ſhall ye remember your own evil ways,
" and your doings that were not good, and ſhall
" loathe yourſelves in your own ſight, for your ini-
" quities, and for your abominations. Not for
" your ſakes do I this, ſaith Adonai JEHOVAH, be
" it known unto you; be aſhamed and confound-
" ed, O houſe of Iſrael," Ezek. xxxvi. 31, 32.

But the lake of fire ſhall go out, when all the purpoſes for which it ſhall be kindled are accompliſhed; and if ſo, then it follows of courſe, that intelligences ſhall be no longer tormented therein.

Friend. But when God ſays, that a fire ſhall not be quenched, does it not neceſſarily imply, that it ſhall never ceaſe burning?

Miniſter. By no means: for we read in ſeveral places of Scripture of fires that have ceaſed, ages ago, that were ſpoken of in as ſtrong terms as are uſed by Chriſt, reſpecting the fire of hell.

As for inſtance: In Lev. vi. 13. we read, " The
" fire ſhall ever be burning upon the altar: it
" ſhall *never* go out." This is a much ſtronger expreſſion than if it had been ſaid, " It ſhall
" not

" not be quenched;" for it is ſaid, " *It ſhall never* " *go out:*" But ſurely, it muſt be uſed with ſome limitation; for we know that it hath ceaſed, ages ago: And we read, that Daniel propheſied of the Meſſiah, that he ſhould " cauſe the ſacrifice and " oblation to ceaſe," Dan. ix. 27; but it would certainly have been a weak argument againſt Daniel's prophecy, that as Moſes had ſaid, The fire ſhould never go out upon the altar, therefore the Meſſiah could never cauſe the ſacrifice and oblation to ceaſe; but it would be juſt as good an argument againſt Daniel's prophecy, as the words of Chriſt are againſt Iſaiah's: " For I will not " contend for ever, neither will I be always " wroth; for the ſpirit ſhould fail before me, " and the ſouls which I have made. I have " ſworn by myſelf, the word is gone out of my " mouth in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, " That unto me every knee ſhall bow, every " tongue ſhall ſwear. Surely ſhall ſay, In JE- " HOVAH have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength; to " him ſhall come; and all that are incenſed againſt " him ſhall be aſhamed," Iſa. lvii. 16. xlv. 23, 24.

In Jer. xvii. 27. we read: " But if you will not " hearken unto me, &c. then will I kindle a fire " in the gates thereof, and it ſhall devour the pa- " laces of Jeruſalem, and *it ſhall not be quenched.*" See alſo chap. iv. 4, xxi. 12. Amos v. 6. 2 Kings xxii. 17.

Similar threatenings we find poſitively pronounced by Ezekiel, at the command of God: " More- " over the word of JEHOVAH came unto me ſay- " ing, Son of man, ſet thy face towards the ſouth, " and drop thy words towards the ſouth, and pro- " pheſy againſt the foreſt of the ſouth field; and " ſay to the foreſt of the ſouth, Hear the word of " JEHOVAH; Thus ſaith Adonai JEHOVAH, Be- " hold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it ſhall

" devour every green tree in thee, and every dry " tree: the flaming flame ſhall not be quenched, " and all faces from the ſouth to the north, ſhall " be burnt therein; and all fleſh ſhall ſee that I " JEHOVAH have kindled it; *it ſhall not be quench-* " *ed*," Ezek. xx. 45, 46, 47, 48. See alſo Jer. vii. 20.

Now theſe threatenings were ſurely executed; for the people did not hearken to God: he did certainly kindle a fire, and it burnt, and was not quenched, but conſumed Jeruſalem and all her palaces; and the beautiful foreſts that were ſo much eſteemed, ſhared the ſame fate: But what perſon will argue, that the whole city and country muſt be now in flames; and muſt have been conſuming, from the days of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, becauſe of theſe expreſſions, "The flaming flame " ſhall not be quenched," &c. ſince we know that Jeruſalem, and the country round about, have been ſince inhabited, and will be again, in a more glorious manner than ever?

Neither will it help the matter to ſay, that we muſt underſtand the fire *figuratively*, for the anger of God, &c. for he declares by Zechariah, after the ſeventy years captivity ,that he was " returned " to Jeruſalem *with mercies*." See Zech. i. 16. And though the preſent deſolation of that land is compared to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, Deut. xxix. 23—28. And Ezekiel not only ſpeaks of it as deſolate and waſte, but as having been always ſo; though we know it was formerly filled with inhabitants: (See Ezek. xxxvi. 34, 35, xxxviii. 8.) Yet all the prophets ſpeak of a time to come, when it ſhall be much more flouriſhing than ever it hath been; and Iſaiah ſays, " Whereas thou haſt been forſaken and hat- " ed, ſo that no man went through thee; I will " make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many " genera-

" generations. Thou ſhalt no more be termed " Forſaken; neither ſhall thy land be termed De- " ſolate; but thou ſhalt be called Hephzibah *(my " delight is in her)* and thy land Beulah *(married)*; " for JEHOVAH delighteth in thee, and thy land " ſhall be married," Iſaiah lx. 15. lxii. 4.

Thus we may ſee, by theſe and many other paſſages, that predictions apparently directly contrary one to the other, may be all fulfilled upon theſame land, people and perſons; only allowing a proper time to each, without which we can never make ſenſe of many prophecies.

Iſaiah, ſpeaking of the land of Bozrah, ſays, " And the ſtreams thereof ſhall be turned into " pitch, and the duſt thereof into brimſtone: and " the land thereof ſhall become burning pitch. " It ſhall not be quenched, night nor day; the " ſmoke thereof ſhall go up for ever: from ge- " neration to generation it ſhall lie waſte; none " ſhall paſs through it, for ever and ever. But " the cormorant and the bittern ſhall poſſeſs it; " the owl alſo, and the raven, ſhall dwell in it:" (birds that cannot live in fire, pitch, and brimſtone, any better than men.) " And thorns ſhall " come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles " in the fortreſſes thereof; and it ſhall be an ha- " bitation for dragons, and a court for owls. " The wild beaſts of the deſart ſhall alſo meet " with the wild beaſts of the iſland, and the ſatyr " ſhall cry to his fellow: the ſcreech-owl alſo " ſhall reſt there, and find for herſelf a place of reſt. " There ſhall the great owl make her neſt, and " lay and hatch, and gather under her ſhadow: " there ſhall the vultures alſo be gathered, every " one with his mate. Seek ye out of the book of " JEHOVAH, and read: no one of theſe ſhall fail, " none ſhall want her mate: for my mouth it " hath commanded, and his Spirit it hath ga-

" thered them. And he hath caſt the lot for " them, and his hand hath divided it unto them " by line: they ſhall poſſeſs it for ever, from ge- " neration to generation ſhall they dwell therein," Iſaiah xxxiv. 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

Now, in this paſſage, there are ſuch things ſpoken of as are impoſſible to be fulfilled at once, without as great a miracle as was wrought for the three children in the furnace; and which there is no reaſon to expect will be wrought in favour of cormorants, bitterns, owls, ravens, dragons, ſatyrs, wild beaſts, thorns, nettles, and brambles. In the 10th verſe we read of a period, called *for ever*, wherein this land is to be on fire, and is not to be quenched, night nor day: and the ſmoke of it is to aſcend up *for ever*; but in the 17th verſe, it is ſaid, that the before-mentioned birds and beaſts ſhall poſſeſs it *for ever*, even from generation to generation ſhall they dwell therein. But one of theſe periods muſt end, before the other can begin; the fire muſt ceaſe to burn, and the ſmoke to aſcend, before beaſts can take up their conſtant dwelling there, and birds can lay and hatch, and gather their young ones under their ſhadow, and enjoy the ſociety of their mates. And thus the whole prophecy may be fulfilled; not in the *ſame*, but in *different* periods: And thus alſo, may all the threatenings, and all the promiſes, in the ſacred book, be accompliſhed; not at once, but each in their ſeaſon.

It appears evident, that our Lord, by alluding to a fire that ſhall burn on earth, and to worms that ſhall devour the fleſh of the ſlain, could not mean to prove the torments of men to be abſolutely *endleſs*; at leaſt, the expreſſions of *the worm* that *dieth not*, and *the fire* that *is not quenched*, do not *neceſſarily* imply it; which has been ſufficiently proved, by the paſſages where the ſame or ſimilar

ſimilar expreſſions are uſed, where yet the ſubject cannot intend *endleſs* duration; and this is all that can be neceſſary to prove at preſent.

As to the expreſſion of being *ſalted with fire*, as *every ſacrifice was ſalted with ſalt*; I am not ſo clear, what might have been our Saviour's intent in this expreſſion; but I think, in the firſt place, he intended to teach us, that they ſhould not be *annihilated* by the fire, but *preſerved* therein, to be tormented day and night, in the preſence of the holy angels, and in the preſence of the Lamb, during the ages of ages. I would alſo propoſe, whether our Lord did not mean to intimate, that even the fire itſelf ſhall be of uſe under his direction, to humble, ſubdue, and penetrate the ſtubborn and diſobedient rebels, that ſhall be caſt into it. *Fire*, as well as *ſalt*, is a great purifier; and preſerves and cleanſes thoſe things which are able to endure it; and is the great agent by which all metals are ſeparated from their droſs, and prepared for the uſe for which they were deſigned. Under the law, all unclean things, that could endure the fire, were ordered to be caſt into it, in order to their cleanſing.

Friend. What you have ſaid concerning the fires that are repreſented as unquenchable, in ſeveral paſſages of Scripture, is worthy of attention; but you ſhould conſider, that theſe fires were all on earth, and in time, and therefore muſt have an end, or ceaſe to burn; but the fire of hell is in eternity, and therefore muſt laſt as long as eternity ſhall endure. Pray, what can you ſay to this?

Miniſter. Had thoſe *unquenchable* fires never gone out while earth endured, or while time laſted, there might have been ſome force in this argument; but ſince the continuance of the fire does not depend upon the *ſeaſon* in which it is kindled, but upon the *combuſtibles* that feed and ſupport it, this can be no objection:

objection: Therefore, ſince thoſe unquenchable fires that have been mentioned, were kindled on earth, and yet did not burn while earth laſted, but have gone out long ago; there is no neceſſity of granting, (even though we ſhould admit your premiſes of the fire of hell being kindled in eternity) that the unquenchable fire of the burning lake *muſt* unavoidably burn to *all eternity*, merely becauſe it is ſuppoſed to belong to that ſtate: But if puniſhments only belong to thoſe ages of ages before Chriſt ſhall reſign the kingdom to the Father, and the lake of fire ſhall be this terraqueous globe, diſſolved, or melted, with fervent heat; then the ground is changed, and the whole objection vaniſhes of courſe.

Friend. As you have come over this objection better than I expected you could, I ſhall leave it for the preſent, and conſider more fully, when I am by myſelf, what you have ſaid upon this ſubject; and ſhall now propoſe the greateſt objection that can be brought againſt the Reſtoration of all men, from the Scriptures; and which, if you can fairly anſwer, I ſhall be almoſt perſuaded to believe with you: but I am perſuaded, that you will be hard put to it.

Miniſter. Produce your cauſe, and bring forth your ſtrong reaſons, that we may hear them; and if I am ſilenced, I will not be aſhamed to acknowledge it with all my heart.

Friend. I ſhall bring my objection from the Scriptures, and ſtate it with the utmoſt preciſion that I am able:—It is the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, of which our Saviour ſpeaks in the moſt awful manner; ſaying, "Wherefore I ſay unto you, all "manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven "unto men: but the blaſphemy againſt the Holy "Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven unto men. And "whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of "man,

" man, it ſhall (*or* may) be forgiven him; but " whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it " ſhall not be forgiven him, neither in this world " (*or* age) neither in the world (*or* age) to come. " Verily, I ſay unto you, all ſins ſhall (*or* may) " be forgiven unto the ſons of men, and blaſphe- " mies wherewith ſoever they ſhall blaſpheme: " but he that ſhall blaſpheme againſt the Holy " Ghoſt, hath never forgiveneſs, (*or* hath not for- " giveneſs to the age) but is in danger of eternal " damnation," St. Matth. xii. 31, 32. St. Mark, iii. 28, 29. This is ſuch a matter of importance, that three of the evangeliſts notice it. St. Luke hath it thus: " And whoſoever ſhall ſpeak a word " againſt the Son of man, it ſhall (*or* may) be " forgiven him: but unto him that blaſphemeth " againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiven," St. Luke, xii. 10. St. Matthew ſaith, this ſin ſhall not be forgiven in this world, nor in that to come; St. Mark, that ſuch an one hath never forgiveneſs, but is in danger of eternal damnation; and St. Luke poſitively ſaith, it ſhall not be forgiven: And, to confirm the matter ſtill more, if poſſible, St. Paul ſaith, " For it is impoſſible for " thoſe who were once enlightened, and have " taſted the heavenly gift, and were made par- " takers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the " good word of God, and the powers of the " world to come; if they ſhall fall away, (*or*, " and have fallen away) to renew them again to " repentance; ſeeing they crucify to themſelves " the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open " ſhame. For if we ſin wilfully, after that we " have received the knowledge of the truth, there " remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins, but a cer- " tain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery " indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſaries. " He that deſpiſed Moſes's law, died without mer-

" cy,

" cy, by the mouth of two or three witneſſes: Of " how much ſorer puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he " be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot " the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of " the covenant, wherewith he was ſanctified, an " unholy thing, and hath done deſpite unto the " Spirit of grace?" Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6, x. 26, 27, 28, 29. And the ſame Apoſtle directs us, ſaying; " Looking diligently, leſt any man fail of the " grace of God: leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpring- " ing up trouble you, and thereby many be de- " filed: Leſt there be any fornicator, or profane " perſon, as Eſau, who for one morſel of meat " ſold his birthright. For ye know how that " afterwards, when he would have inherited the " bleſſing, he was rejected; for he found no " place of repentance, though he ſought it care- " fully with tears." Heb. xii. 15, 16 17.

And St. John, the beloved diſciple, ſays; " If " any man ſee his brother ſin a ſin which is not " unto death, he ſhall aſk, and he ſhall give him " life for them that ſin not unto death. There is " a ſin unto death: I do not ſay that he ſhall pray " for it," 1 John v. 16.

Now here is a ſin for which there is no forgive- neſs, neither in this world (*or* age) or in that to come; which ſhall not be forgiven at all; he that committeth it hath never forgiveneſs, is in danger of eternal damnation; he cannot be renewed again to repentance, becauſe he hath crucified Chriſt to himſelf afreſh, and hath put him to an open ſhame: having ſinned wilfully and maliciouſly, after receiv- ing the knowledge of the truth, to ſuch no more ſacrifice for ſins remaineth; judgment and fiery in- dignation are his certain portion; he is an adver- ſary, and muſt be devoured: a ſorer puniſhment than death without mercy awaits him, of which he is worthy, for that he hath trodden under foot the Son

Son of God, the only Saviour, and hath counted the precious blood of the covenant, wherewith he was ſanctified, and which alone is able to cleanſe from ſin, an unholy thing; and hath done deſpite to the Spirit of grace, which is only able to renew the heart, and therefore the caſe of ſuch muſt be deſperate; for if ſuch an one, like Eſau, ſhould wiſh to repent and gain what he had loſt, it could not be, for he would find no place for repentance, though he might ſeek it carefully with tears; for having committed the ſin unto death, for which no prayer is to be made, no interceſſion offered up, he is bound over to the ſecond death, the lake of fire and brimſtone, and muſt bear the puniſhment of his ſins for ever and ever!!!—What ſay you to this?

Miniſter. As when Nebuchadnezzar told Daniel his dream, he was aſtoniſhed for one hour at the greatneſs of the puniſhment which he ſaw would inevitably come upon the King; much more muſt all thoſe be, who read and conſider theſe dreadful threatenings, which muſt ſurely come upon all thoſe who have ſinned in the manner deſcribed! I ſhall make a few obſervations upon theſe moſt terrible paſſages of Scripture; partly to prevent feeble minds from falling into deſpair, that may ſee them collected in one ſtriking view; partly to cure proud minds of preſumption; and partly to ſhew that the doctrine of the Reſtoration may be defended, notwithſtanding.

1. We are ſure that the Scribes and Phariſees of our Saviour's time, who blaſphemouſly aſcribed his miracles to the power of the devil, did, in the moſt direct and undeniable manner, commit that ſin; and ſome are doubtful whether it can be committed by any in theſe days.

2. It is generally acknowledged, that the Hebrews were in danger of committing that ſin, by

openly and wilfully apoſtatizing from Chriſtianity, and publickly renouncing Chriſt and his ſalvation, and blaſpheming againſt the Holy Ghoſt, after having been partakers of its extraordinary gifts.

3. It cannot be committed by ignorant perſons, nor without a conſiderable degree of malice prepenſe: light in the underſtanding, and malice in the heart, are neceſſary ingredients of this dreadful crime; and it appears to me, it muſt be committed openly, and that it cannot be committed in thought only.

4. Under the Levitical diſpenſation there were many unpardonable ſins—crimes that could not be forgiven or overlooked, and for which no atonement could be made, and which were puniſhed with death, without mercy; other crimes, unleſs ſacrifices were offered, and repentance took place, ſubjected the parties to death alſo: but, under the goſpel, there is but one crime that is properly unpardonable, and that abſolutely ſubjects the perſon guilty of it to the ſecond death; yet many other ſins are threatened with the ſame puniſhment conditionally, but they may be forgiven, and not puniſhed at all; but this one muſt as certainly be puniſhed with the ſecond death, as murder or any other crime, was by the law of Moſes puniſhed with the death of the body without mercy or forgiveneſs. *Forgery* is the unpardonable ſin of England: people frequently ſuffer death for other crimes, as well as this; but other offences are ſometimes forgiven, but this never; it is always puniſhed with death. This circumſtance may illuſtrate my meaning. The ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is an offence of that kind, that, either owing to its uncommon malignity, as is moſt likely, or ſome other cauſe, expoſes the guilty perſon to the age of judgment, from which he cannot eſcape by repentance, pardon, and ſprinkling of the blood of Chriſt, as other

other ſinners may; neither can he be at preſent born of the Spirit, to which he hath done deſpite; nor can he be reclaimed by any poſſible means, in this age, or in the age that is to ſucceed this, but is inevitably bound over to ſuffer the inconceivable torments of the ſecond death, or lake of fire and brimſtone, after the day of judgment.

5. There is no kind of diſpute between us, reſpecting the certainty of the puniſhment of ſuch; in this we both agree: he that ſinneth againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is in danger of eternal damnation, or judgment, or the ſecond death:—The queſtion is, Shall there ever come a time, when the ſecond death, or lake of fire, ſhall no more exiſt? If this can be proved, the concluſion will be evident, *viz.* that not one ſhall remain under the power thereof to all eternity: Upon this, and this alone, depends the ſolution of this awful, intereſting, and moſt important queſtion: and I conſider all other anſwers as mere quibbles, compared with this. And if it cannot be proved that a time will come, when all that bears the name of death ſhall be deſtroyed, thoſe who commit the ſin unto death, muſt, at leaſt, be allowed to ſtand as exceptions to the general rule; and, I am apt to think, the rule itſelf will be overthrown. I ſhall therefore labour this point a little; and if I ſhould be ſo happy as to prove to your ſatisfaction the total deſtruction of death, it will anſwer many other objections as well as this. My only refuge is Scripture; if that fails me, I ſhall not preſume to purſue the ſubject farther.

Iſa. xxv. 8. "He will ſwallow up *Death* in victory; and Adonai JEHOVAH will wipe away tears "from off all faces." Hoſ. xiii. 14. "I will ran-"ſom them from the power of the grave; I will "redeem them from death, O death, I will be "thy plagues; O grave, (*or* hell) I will be thy

" deſtruction: Repentance ſhall be hid from mine " eyes." 1 Cor. xv. 26. " The laſt enemy that " ſhall be deſtroyed is *Death*"—or rather, as the words may more properly be arranged, " *Death*, " the laſt enemy, ſhall be deſtroyed." The ſecond death is infinitely more the enemy of man than the firſt, and may therefore be conſidered as an enemy which God will deſtroy.—Now,

If the laſt enemy ſhall be deſtroyed, there will not be one left.

But the firſt is true; therefore alſo the laſt. As,

Would it not be highly abſurd to ſay, that, Although the very laſt enemy ſhall be deſtroyed, yet, many millions ſhall remain to all eternity?

Verſe 56. " The ſting of *Death* is ſin." While ſin remains in exiſtence, death will be able to ſhew its ſting; but the time will come when death ſhall have no ſting to boaſt of; therefore ſin, and conſequently death of every kind, ſhall be deſtroyed.—1 John iii. 8. " For this purpoſe the Son of God " was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works " of the devil." Unleſs Chriſt finally deſtroys the works of the devil, even all ſin out of the univerſe, his purpoſe muſt be eternally fruſtrated:

But the laſt can never be: therefore the firſt is true.

Heb. ii. 14. " Foraſmuch, then, as the children " are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf " likewiſe took part of the ſame; that through " death he might deſtroy him that had the power " of death, that is the devil."—Now what death has the devil power over? the death of the body? or that of the ſoul, which conſiſts in enmity againſt God, and ſeparation from him? " To be carnally " minded is death; but to be ſpiritually minded is " life and peace. Becauſe the carnal mind is en- " mity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the law of

" of God, neither indeed can be," Rom. viii. 6, 7. If this death, with the conſequence of it, is that which the devil hath the power of, then muſt this death be deſtroyed.

But, I think, the firſt is true; therefore alſo the laſt.

Rev. xxi. 4. we read, " And God ſhall wipe " away all tears from their eyes; and there " ſhall be no more *Death*, neither ſorrow, nor " crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain: " for the former things are paſſed away." Here is a ſtate ſpoken of beyond all death; a ſtate wherein ſorrow, crying, and pain ſhall be no more. This ſtate is cotemporary with the new heaven and earth, after the lake of fire hath ceaſed.

Friend. We have always underſtood this paſſage to relate to the death of the body, and even to the death of the righteous only; but making this ſtate cotemporary with the new heavens and earth, ſeems to throw a new light upon the ſubject.

Miniſter. Moſt certainly the word *Death* here implies the ſecond death; for we are informed, in the foregoing chapter, of the firſt reſurrection, even that of the martyrs, who were beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God; and ſuch as had not worſhipped the beaſt and his image, neither had received his mark in their foreheads, or in their hands: then we read of a thouſand years between this reſurrection, and the reſt of the dead living again: after this, we find, that the dead, ſmall and great, ſtood before God, and were judged; and ſuch as were not found written in the book of life, were caſt into the lake of fire, which is expreſſly called " the ſecond death;" which, as before obſerved, is probably the earth in its melted ſtate. In this chapter we find, that all things are to be made new; and *Death* is to

be

be no more, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither any more pain. But this muſt be the ſecond death, or lake of fire; for the reſurrection of all the bodies, both of the juſt and unjuſt, had been ſpoken of before.

Thus, as all ſin, and all that bears the name of death, ſhall be entirely deſtroyed at laſt; the doctrine of endleſs miſery ſeems to fall to the ground, or, at leaſt, cannot be certainly proved from Scripture, but rather the contrary.

The time muſt come when all things ſhall be ſubject to Chriſt, when he ſhall deſtroy death, the laſt enemy, by deſtroying ſin, which is the ſting of death; ſo this dreadful ſin, as well as others, ſhall be no more. For if this was not to be the caſe, it never could be true, that "where ſin abounded, "grace did much more abound:" for it never would abound quite ſo much; neither would death and hell be ſilent when God ſhall aſk the great queſtions, "O death where is thy ſting? O grave; "(*or* hell) where is thy victory?" for death could ſay, Here is my ſting, that ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which muſt endure to all eternity, and which even divine grace ſhall never deſtroy; I have, therefore, the victory and dominion over theſe ſinners who have commited it, and will hold it while God himſelf exiſts. Then death could never be deſtroyed, nor ſwallowed up in victory; neither would ſorrow, crying, and pain ceaſe; neither could God ever be ALL IN ALL, in any other ſenſe, with reſpect to them, than he is now; nor would *every tongue ſwear*; neither would all things wholly be made new, nor all the former things ever paſs away! neither could the univerſal chorus of praiſe ever be ſung by every creature, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and throughout God's wide domain; and, finally, many Scriptures would never ſeem to be fulfilled, in the fulleſt ſenſe.

ſenſe. Rom. v. 20, 21. " But where ſin abounded, " grace did much more abound; that as ſin hath " reigned unto death; even ſo might grace reign, " through righteouſneſs, unto eternal life, by " Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." Now, if grace ſhall abound more than ſin, it ſhall be as univerſal, and more powerful: But the firſt is true; therefore alſo the laſt. If grace ſhall be as extenſive as ſin, and more powerful, all who have ſinned ſhall be reſtored: But the firſt is true; therefore alſo the laſt.

What conſequences muſt follow from the ſuppoſition, that ſome of God's creatures ſhall always remain his enemies! Either God created ſome to be miſerable to endleſs ages, or muſt be fruſtrated eternally in his deſigns, or all muſt be reſtored at laſt, and made happy by love and free love.

The firſt is blaſphemous, the ſecond is diſhonourable to God: therefore, the third muſt be true: For I cannot think of a fourth concluſion.

Friend. What do you think of the deplorable caſe of Eſau, " who, for one morſel of meat, ſold " his birthright; and afterwards, when he would " have inherited the bleſſing, he was rejected; for " he found no place of repentance, though he " ſought it carefully, with tears?

Miniſter. He certainly loſt, or rather ſold, his birth-right; in conſequence of which, he loſt the bleſſing belonging to the firſt-born: But leſt any ſhould be led to conclude from this, that poor *Eſau* had no bleſſings at all, the ſame apoſtle informs us, that, " By faith, Iſaac bleſſed Jacob and " Eſau, concerning thing to come," Heb. xi. 20. By this we find, he was bleſſed, as well as Jacob; but in a leſs degree.

Friend. Do we not read, " Jacob have I loved; " but Eſau have I hated?" Rom. ix. 13. Mal. i. 2, 3.

Miniſter.

Miniſter. Yes, moſt certainly: But then this love and hatred, ſo called, was manifeſted to their poſterity, and not to their perſons, in the manner deſcribed by the prophet: "I have loved you, ſaith "JEHOVAH: yet ye ſay, Wherein haſt thou loved "us? Was not Eſau Jacob's brother? ſaith JE-"HOVAH: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Eſau, "and laid his mountains and his heritage waſte, "for the dragons of the wilderneſs." This manifeſtation of hatred did not affect the eternal ſtate of their ſouls, but their condition in this world: God declared, that Jacob's ſeed ſhould exiſt as a diſtinct people to the end of time, but that Eſau's ſhould not: and this difference is evident; for the remains of Eſau's ſeed were, in the days of the Maccabees, incorporated with the ſeed of Jacob, and exiſted no more for ever, as a nation by themſelves. From Jacob's race the Meſſiah was to come, and all nations were to be bleſſed in the ſeed of Iſrael. In all theſe inſtances, and in many others, there was a manifeſt preference of Jacob to Eſau; but nothing like poſitive hatred can be intended.

Chriſt ſays, (St. Luke, xiv. 26.) "If any man "come to me, and hate not his father and mother, "and wife, and children, and brethren, and ſiſters, "yea, and his own life alſo, he cannot be my diſci-"ple." But we cannot ſuppoſe our Lord intended poſitive, but comparative hatred; according to St. Matth. x. 37. "He that loveth father or mother "more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that "loveth ſon or daughter more than me, is not "worthy of me."

Friend. What you have ſaid upon this ſubject appears to have ſome weight, and I will conſider it more fully hereafter: but I muſt beg leave to aſk you, how you get over that great gulph which is placed between the regions of *Paradiſe* and *Gehenna*,

henna, of which Abraham ſpeaks to the rich man; ſaying, "And beſides all this, between us and "you there is a great gulph fixed; ſo that they "which would paſs from hence to you, cannot; "neither can they paſs to us, that would come "from thence." Does not this imply the abſolute impoſſibility of the rich man's being ever reſtored?

Miniſter. You have aſked me many queſtions; give me leave to aſk you one.—Do you believe, that Jeſus of Nazareth was able to paſs that impaſſable gulph?

Friend. Indeed, that is a queſtion I never heard propoſed before; and which I am not prepared to anſwer, without farther conſideration. Pray, be ſo kind as to give an anſwer yourſelf, and tell me what you think of it.

Miniſter. I believe, that with *man* it is impoſſible; but with GOD all things are poſſible: And I believe, that Jeſus Chriſt was not only able to paſs, but that he actually did paſs that gulph, which was impaſſable to all *men*, but not to him: And he aſſures St. John, that he had paſſed it, and not only ſo, but that he had the keys of the ſame in his poſſeſſion; for he ſaith, "Fear not, I am the firſt and "the laſt; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and "behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and "have the keys of hell and death." And St. Peter informs us, that "Chriſt once ſuffered for ſins, the "juſt for the unjuſt, (that he might bring us unto "God); being put to death in the fleſh, but "quickened by the Spirit; by which alſo he went "and preached to the ſpirits in priſon; who ſome-"time were diſobedient, when once the long ſuffer-"ing of God waited, in the days of Noah, while "the ark was a preparing:" And he alſo tells us, that we "ſhall give account to him that is "ready to judge the quick and the dead. For,

" for this cauſe was the goſpel preached alſo to " them that are dead," (in diſtinction from them that are quick) " that they might be judged ac- " cording to men in the fleſh, but live according " to God in the ſpirit." See Rev. i. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, 20. iv. 5, 6.

Friend. You know, the common opinion is, that the Spirit of God, in Noah, preached unto the inhabitants of the old world; who, in St. Peter's time, were ſhut up in the priſon of hell: But I muſt confeſs, it appears to me a very dark text.

Miniſter. If you only obſerve how particular the expreſſions are in theſe texts, I think it will ſoon appear, that not the Spirit of God in Noah, but the ſpirit, or ſoul, of Chriſt, in its diſembodied ſtate, is here intended. His body was doubtleſs quickened, by his ſoul, or ſpirit coming into it again: Was it not?

Friend. It ſeems moſt reaſonable to believe it was.

Miniſter. Then obſerve the next words, *he went*; here the idea of a journey to a diſtant place is intimated, the original word being expreſſive of an actual paſſage from one place to another, and is the ſame that is uſed in ver. 22, for the aſcenſion of Chriſt into heaven, ſo that he appears to have gone into the priſon in the ſame proper ſenſe, as he afterwards went into heaven. He actually journeyed to the place of confinement, *and preached to the ſpirits*, &c. He preached *the goſpel* no doubt; not to men in the body, but to *the ſpirits*, to thoſe in a diſembodied ſtate; not only ſo, but to *the ſpirits in priſon:* Had they not been in the priſon, Chriſt would not have gone into the priſon to preach to them. But, who were theſe ſpirits? St. Peter informs us, that they are thoſe who were *ſometime diſobedient*; but this expreſſion intimates, that the time is perfectly paſt; as, " Ye *were* the

" ſervants

" ſervants of ſin : for when ye *were* the ſervants " of ſin, ye *were* free from righteouſneſs," Rom. vi. 17, 20. St. Peter tells us when they were diſobedient; *when once the long-ſuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing:* Here he evidently diſtinguiſhes the two periods of their viſitation; one is called the preaching of Chriſt, by his ſpirit, after he was put to death in the fleſh; and the other is called the long-ſuffering of God, which waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing. The long-ſuffering of God waited upon them, before they were drowned, while the ark was building; but Chriſt preached to them when they were ſpirits in priſon. They were diſobedient to God's long-ſuffering; but it is not certain that they were ſo when Chriſt preached to them; but the contrary is intimated in theſe words: " *For, for this cauſe was the goſpel preached alſo to them that are dead*, &c. This cannot intend thoſe that are *ſpiritually* dead only, but thoſe whoſe bodies are dead; becauſe we here find *the dead* ſet in oppoſition to *the quick*, or thoſe whoſe bodies are alive, and not thoſe that are *ſpiritually alive:* for we may obſerve, that whenever the words *quick* and *dead* occur, by *quick*, we always underſtand thoſe whoſe bodies are alive; and by *dead*, thoſe who have ceaſed to exiſt here.

Acts, x. 40, &c. St. Peter, in his ſermon to Cornelius and his family, informed them of Jeſus, who was ſlain, whom " God raiſed from the dead, " and ſhewed him openly: not to all the people, " but unto witneſſes, choſen before of God; even " to us, who did eat and drink with him, after he " roſe from the dead. And he commanded us to " preach unto the people, and to teſtify, that it is " he, who was ordained of God to be the judge of " *quick* and *dead.*" And St. Paul ſays to Timothy, " I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the

" Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the *quick* and " the *dead* at his appearing, and his kingdom ; " preach the word," &c. See 2 Tim. iv. 1. So, in 1 Pet. iv. 5. the words *quick* and *dead* are uſed in the ſame manner; and then immediately, while the idea is warm in our minds, the apoſtle gives us the reaſons why the goſpel was preached to *the dead*, (*or* the ſpirits in priſon) of which he had before informed us, and now repeats again, and aſſures us, that it was, *that they might be judged according to men, in the fleſh* ; or, as though they had heard it while they were alive in the fleſh : *but* alſo, that they might *live according to God, in the ſpirit*. The goſpel not only *was*, but *is*, preached to them that are dead, in a *moral* or *ſpiritual* ſenſe. It need not have been ſaid; *For*, *for this cauſe was the goſpel preached* ALSO *to them that are dead*, if only the ſpiritually dead are intended ; for it is rarely preached to any other but ſuch. Why ſhould it be ſaid, *that they might be judged according to men in the fleſh*, if they were men in the fleſh at the time when it was preached to them?

This paſſage proves the exiſtence of the ſoul after the death of the body : for unleſs the ſouls of the antedeluvians exiſted after the drowning of their bodies, Chriſt could not have preached to them in priſon : But the *dead* being oppoſed to the *quick* in this paſſage, ſufficiently, and even inconteſtibly, determines the ſenſe.

With a little attention, we may eaſily be convinced, that Chriſt was not only deſigned to be a Covenant of the people, (meaning the Jews) and a Light to the Gentiles; which two deſcriptions comprehend all the living : but alſo, to bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſit in darkneſs out of the priſon-houſe ; which (if it be not a repetition) muſt intend the *dead*, as all the *living* were mentioned before.

" And

" And he ſaid, It is a light thing that thou " ſhouldeſt be my ſervant, to raiſe up the tribes of " Jacob, and to reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael: I " will alſo give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that " thou mayeſt be my ſalvation unto the ends of the " earth. Thus ſaith JEHOVAH, In an acceptable " time have I heard thee and in a day of ſalvation " have I helped thee: and I will preſerve thee, " and give thee for a covenant of the people, to " eſtabliſh the earth, to cauſe to inherit the deſo- " late heritages." Thus far the Redeemer's work ſeems limited to the earth, and reſpects the living: But the prophet goes much farther, and ſays, " That thou mayeſt ſay to the priſoners, Go forth: " to them that are in darkneſs, Shew yourſelves: " they ſhall feed in the ways, and their paſtures " ſhall be in all high places. They ſhall not " hunger, nor thirſt; neither ſhall the heat nor " ſun ſmite them; for he that hath mercy upon " them ſhall lead them, even by the ſprings of " water ſhall he guide them." See Iſaiah, xlii. 6, 7. xlix. 6, 8, 9, 10. Compared with Rev. vii. 14, 15, 16, 17. The work of the Saviour, as deſcribed by the elegant pen of Iſaiah, (chap. lxi. 1, 2, 3.) ſeems to comprehend a great variety of particulars; all which he hath performed already, or ſhall execute in due time. " The Spirit " of Adonai JEHOVAH is upon me; becauſe JE- " HOVAH hath anointed me, (1) to preach good " tidings to the meek: (2) He hath ſent me to " bind up the broken-hearted; (3) to proclaim " liberty to the captives, (4) and the opening of " the priſon to them that are bound: (5) To pro- " claim the acceptable year of JEHOVAH, (6) and " the day of vengeance of our God: (7) To com- " fort all that mourn: (8) To appoint unto them " that mourn in Zion, to give unto them, *Firſt*, " beauty for aſhes; *Secondly*, the oil of joy for " mourn-

" mourning; *Thirdly*, the garment of praiſe for " the ſpirit of heavineſs: that they might be " called, *Firſt*, Trees of righteouſneſs; *Secondly*, " The planting of JEHOVAH; *(and* ALL *for this* " *great end)*—that he might be glorified."

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by his proceſs, hath laid a foundation for the recovery of all men; " For to " this end Chriſt both died, roſe, and revived, that " he might be Lord, both of the dead and living," Rom. xiv. 9. He paſſed through all our ſtates, that he might redeem us. He came down from Heaven—he was conceived in the womb of Mary—he was born of her—he lived in the world unknown—he ſympathized with us in our ſorrows —he bare our ſins in his own body, on the tree—he was buried—he deſcended into *Hades*—He aroſe—aſcended—ſitteth at the right hand of God —and maketh continual interceſſion for us.

It ſeemed neceſſary, that our Saviour ſhould viſit men in all ſituations, that he might redeem them. The apoſtle informs us, ſaying, " Foraſmuch as " the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, " he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame; " that through death, he might deſtroy him that " had the power of death, that is, the devil; and " deliver them, who, through fear of death, were " all their life-time ſubject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14, 15. It was not only neceſſary that he ſhould die, to vanquiſh death, and to redeem us from its power; but it was equally needful for him to go into thoſe places, where ſpirits were confined in the regions of darkneſs; that he might gain univerſal dominion, ſpoil principalities, and redeem the captives whom he had bought with his blood, in order that he might aſcend up to Heaven, and open to his followers the gates of eternal life.

" Wherefore he ſaith, When he aſcended up on " high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts

" unto

" unto men. Now that he aſcended, what is it " but that he alſo deſcended firſt into the lower " parts of the earth? He that deſcended, is the " ſame alſo that aſcended up far above all heavens, " that he might fill all things," Epheſ. iv. 8, 9, 10. " And having ſpoiled principalities and powers, " he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing " over them in it," Col. ii. 15.

Thus our Saviour by his divine proceſs, hath obtained a right to open the priſon doors, and let the captives go free: and though the rich man was in torments, where he could not get a drop of water to cool his tongue, and had *judgment without mercy*, becauſe he had *ſhewed no mercy*; yet it is poſſible, that, by the blood of the covenant; he may be ſent forth out of the pit wherein is no water. See Zech. ix. 11. The Lord Jeſus is able to take the prey from the mighty, and to deliver the lawful captive, Iſa. xlix. 24.

" Such as ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of " death, being bound in affliction, and iron; be- " cauſe they rebelled againſt the words of God, and " contemned the counſel of the Moſt High; there- " fore he brought down their heart with labour; " they fell down, and there was none to help."— This evidently points out the deplorable, miſerable ſtate of ſinners, cut off in their ſins; having rebelled againſt God's words, and contemned his counſels; for which reaſon he hath ſhut them up in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death; in ſuch a ſituation, that no power but his own, can give them the leaſt help, much leſs *releaſe*. Such circumſtances ſeldom occur in this life; but theſe words are a lively and affecting deſcription of the miſeries of the future ſtate.

" Then they cried unto JEHOVAH in their trou- " ble, and he ſaved them out of their diſtreſſes. " He brought them out of darkneſs, and the ſha- " dow of death, and brake their bands in ſunder.

" O that

" O that men would praiſe JEHOVAH for his good-
" neſs, and for his wonderful works to the chil-
" dren of men! For he hath broken the gates of
" braſs, and cut the bars of iron in ſunder," Pſal. cvii. 10——16.

This amazing deliverance ſeems to be deſcribed in ſuch language, as correſponds much better with the deliverance of the ſpirits from their dreadful priſon, than with any temporal mercies that are beſtowed on mankind *here on earth.* " The
" righteous ſhall ſee it, and rejoice; and all ini-
" quity ſhall ſtop her mouth: Whoſo is wiſe, and
" will obſerve theſe things, even they ſhall under-
" ſtand the loving kindneſs of JEHOVAH," ver. 42, 43.

Thoſe who are acquainted with the Divine character, and ſee his deſigns of mercy towards his creatures, ſhall rejoice in the ſame: They that are wiſe, ſhall obſerve theſe things, and ſhall underſtand his loving kindneſs; and that " JEHOVAH is
' good to all: and his tender mercies are over all
" his works," Pſal. cxlv 9.

Thus, how impoſſible ſoever it may appear to us, that the rich man ſhould ever be delivered, we muſt remember, that " with God nothing ſhall be
" impoſſible," St. Luke i. 37. " Is there any
" thing too hard for JEHOVAH?" Gen. xviii. 14. " Behold (ſays he) I am JEHOVAH, the God of
" all fleſh: Is there any thing too hard for me?" Jer. xxxii. 27.

Our Saviour ſays, (St. Matt. xix. 24, St. Mark x. 25. St. Luke xviii. 25.) " It is eaſier for a camel
" to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich
" man to enter into the kingdom of God." Whether the word here uſed, intends a camel or a cable, it certainly implied the greateſt difficulty imaginable, even amounting in the view of his diſciples, to a natural impoſſibility, or they would not have been as the evangeliſt expreſſes it, *exceedingly amazed, and*

and aſtoniſhed out of meaſure at his words, " ſaying " among themſelves, Who then can be ſaved?" But, though Jeſus meant to repreſent the matter as in itſelf a kind of natural impoſſibility, and abſolutely impoſſible to men; yet he could not intend thereby, that it never ſhould be accompliſhed, becauſe he immediately adds, " With men, " this is impoſſible; but not with God: For with " God all things are poſſible," St. Mark x. 27. Therefore, though it was impoſſible for *men* to paſs the gulph between *Paradiſe* and *Gehenna*; yet, as we have ſeen, Chriſt was able, and therefore as we know not the *ne plus ultra* of his power to ſave, we cannot poſitively conclude *againſt the Reſtoration*, from this inſtance of the rich man, unleſs we could find ſome paſſages of Scripture, where God has promiſed never to reſtore, or reconcile ſuch to himſelf, whom he hath once caſt off: the contrary to which, I think, may be proved: but I am at preſent conſidering, that, in the nature of things, it is not impoſſible for God to reſtore the rich man, if he ſo pleaſes; and, conſequently, others that are in the ſame ſituation.

Behold the rich man in another world!——He ſeems *now* to have much more true benevolence in him, than in his life-time; for when he could not obtain a drop of water for his tongue, he pleads much more earneſtly for Lazarus to be ſent to his five brethren, to teſtify to them, leſt they alſo ſhould come into the ſame place of torment with himſelf. Here he urges the matter moſt earneſtly, and does not ſeem willing to be denied. This ſhews him not to have been ſo loſt to virtue as Satan; ſince he and his angels, though miſerable themſelves, ſeek to make all men ſo too, though their torments are increaſed thereby.

Add to all this, that Abraham called the rich man, " *Son*," and bade him remember, that in his life-time he had his good things: and likewiſe

Lazarus, evil things; and that therefore it was but reaſonable that the ſcene ſhould be changed: that Lazarus ſhould be comforted, and he tormented. And I think, nothing can be fairly argued from his caſe, in favour of *endleſs damnation*: For in caſe he was doomed to ſuffer *while God exiſts*, there could be no proportion between the ſufferings, torments, and evil things of Lazarus on earth, and thoſe which *he* endured in hell; whereas it is intimated in the Scriptures, that all things are determined by number, weight, and meaſure. Let us hear what our Lord has ſaid upon the ſubject. St. Luke xii, 47, 48. "And "that ſervant who knew his Lord's will, and pre- "pared not himſelf, neither did according to his "will, ſhall be beaten with MANY ſtripes. But "he that knew not, and did commit things worthy "of ſtripes, ſhall be beaten with FEW ſtripes: for "unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall "be much required; and to whom men have com- "mitted much, of him they will aſk the more." But what difference, ſo much to be noticed, could there be, if both were to be beaten *to all eternity?* or how could either be ſaid to have FEW, if there was never to be an end? Impoſſible! Rev. xviii. 7. "How much ſhe (Babylon) hath glorified "herſelf, and lived deliciouſly; ſo much torment "and ſorrow give her." All this appears juſt and reaſonable: But to ſuppoſe a poor ignorant Heathen, or a child of ten years old, will remain in miſery as long as the moſt perſecuting Tyrant, or apoſtate Chriſtian, ſeems to contradict all the ideas we have of juſtice and equity, as well as of goodneſs; for in this caſe, who can ſuppoſe that each one is exactly rewarded according to his works? And eſpecially, can any think, that *mercy* has any hand in a reward, where there is ſeemingly no proportion? Whereas we read, (Pſalm lxii. 12.)

12.) " Alſo unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: " for thou rendereſt to every man according to " his work."

Friend. Indeed, I could not have thought that ſo much could have been ſaid upon that ſide of the caſe; and though I am not yet wholly ſatisfied, I muſt confeſs, ſome of my great difficulties ſeem to be removed, from what you have ſaid; and yet there appears ſomething very dreadful in the account. Pray, do you underſtand it as a parable?

Miniſter. I am moſt inclined to think it is a piece of real hiſtory, known to our Saviour, who was well acquainted with what paſſed in the ſpiritual, as well as the natural world; and who intended thereby to give an awful warning to the Phariſees, (who were covetous) of the dreadful condition of wicked rich men in the next ſtate: and eſpecially, of thoſe who neglect or deſpiſe the poor.

Friend. I am inclined to think with you in this matter: and therefore, without any farther delay, I ſhall paſs to mention another ſtrong objection to the doctrine of the Reſtoration of all men; *viz.* the inſtance of *Judas*: of whom our Saviour ſays, " The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him; " but woe to that man by whom the Son of man " is betrayed; it had been good for that man, if he " had not been born, St, Matt. xxvi. 24. St. Mark, xiv. 21. If Judas ſhould ever be reſtored, how could the Saviour ſay, " Good were it for that " man, if he had never been born?" I think you will find it difficult to remove this objection; for, if he is ever to be happy, (though after many ages) it will be good for him that he was born.

Miniſter. I cannot think that this is ſo ſtrong an argument againſt the general Reſtitution, as moſt that uſe it imagine. It was a common proverb

among the Jews, when any great misfortune happened to a man, or his family, to ſay, "Good "were it for that man, if he had never been born." And thus our Saviour uſed it with great propriety reſpecting Judas: for who, that thinks with any reaſon at all, would not have wiſhed that he had never been born, rather than to have betrayed the dear Redeemer?

Friend. But can any thing leſs than *endleſs* damnation be ſufficient to juſtify the expreſſion of "Good were it for that man, that he had never "been born?"

Miniſter. I am of opinion that even worldly troubles (ſhort as they are) may ſufficiently juſtify the expreſſion. There are a thouſand circumſtances into which the children of Adam fall, that make their caſe infinitely worſe than though they had never been born, even without ſuppoſing a ſtate of future puniſhment at all. I had rather, a thouſand times, never have been born, than to have betrayed Chriſt, even upon the ſuppoſition that I had never been doomed to ſuffer for it beyond this life. Job, when he had loſt his ſubſtance, his children, and his eaſe, opened his mouth, and, through exceſs of grief curſed the day of his birth: though it does not appear that he had any fear of future damnation, but the reverſe.

"And Job ſpake, and ſaid, "Let the day pe-"riſh wherein I was born; and the night in "which it was ſaid, There is a man-child con-"ceived. Let that day be darkneſs; let not God "regard it from above; neither let the light ſhine "upon it. Let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death "ſtain it; let a cloud dwell upon it: let the "blackneſs of day terrify it. As for that night, "let darkneſs ſeize upon it: let it not be joined "unto the days of the year; let it not come into "the number of the months. Lo! let that night

be

" be ſolitary; let no joyful voice come therein. " Let them curſe it that curſe the day, who are " ready to raiſe up their mourning, Let the " ſtars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it " look for light, but have none; neither let it ſee " the dawning of the day; becauſe it ſhut not up " the doors of my mother's womb, nor hid ſorrow " from mine eyes. Why died I not from the " womb? Why did not I give up the ghoſt, when " I came out of the belly? Why did the knees " prevent me? or, why the breaſts that I ſhould " ſuck? For now ſhould I have been ſtill, and " been quiet; I ſhould have ſlept; then had I " been at reſt, with kings and counſellors of the " earth, who built deſolate places for themſelves; " or with princes, that had gold, who filled their " houſes with ſilver: Or, as an hidden, untimely " birth, I had not been; as infants, who never " ſaw light. There the wicked ceaſe from troub- " ling; and there the weary be at reſt. There " the priſoners reſt together: they hear not the " voice of the oppreſſer. The ſmall and great are " there; and the ſervant is free from his maſter," See Job, iii. 2———19.

From this diſcourſe, it ſeems, that Job thought it would have been better for him never to have been born, than to have fallen into ſuch ſore troubles in this preſent life, without taking the other into his account; but if he had known that he had been doomed to ſuffer the amazing torments of the ſecond death, in the lake of fire and brimſtone, what would he have ſaid? Even upon the ſuppoſition that it was only to laſt for ages, he would have thought that his being born into this world, to be fitted for ſuch a puniſhment, would have been the greateſt curſe that could have befallen him.

If Job, who could ſay, " I know that my Redeemer

" deemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the lat-
" ter day upon the earth: And, though after
" my ſkin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my
" fleſh ſhall I ſee God: whom I ſhall ſee for my-
" ſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not ano-
" ther; though my reins be conſumed within me.
" He knoweth the way that I take; and when he
" hath tried me, I ſhall come forth as gold. My
" foot hath held his ſteps; his way have I kept,
" and not declined; neither have I gone back
" from the commandment of his lips: I have eſ-
" teemed the words of his mouth more than my
" neceſſary food. Though he ſlay me, yet will I
" truſt in him: but I will maintain mine own ways
" before him. He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.
" My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it
" go: my heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as
" I live." (See Job, xix. 25, 26, 27. xxiii. 10, 11, 12. xiii. 15, 16. xxvii. 6.) And who could make ſuch a ſolemn proteſtation of his innocence and uprightneſs, before God and man, as we find in the xxix. xxx. xxxi. chapters of that book. If ſuch a man had reaſon to ſay, " Wherefore, then,
" haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?
" Oh! that I had given up the ghoſt, and no eye
" had ſeen me! I ſhould have been as though I
" had not been; I ſhould have been carried from
" the womb to the grave," (See Job x. 18, 19.) with what amazing propriety might Chriſt ſay of Judas, the traitor, who ſinned in ſuch a dreadful manner, and had ſuch horrible guilt on his conſcience: who died in black deſpair, periſhed in ſuch an awful ſituation, in his ſins, and, probably, by his own hands; who ſuffered the moſt violent agitations of mind, died under the power of the horrid ſuggeſtions of the great enemy of men, without one ſmile, or look of forgiveneſs, from Jeſus, or even daring to ſeek it; whoſe ſorrow in this

this life far exceeded Job's, (for Job had no ſenſe of guilt, treaſon, and ingratitude; nor was he filled with rage, blaſphemy, and deſpair)—and who muſt probably have his portion in the ſecond death;—"Good were it for that man, if he had "never been born!" even upon the ſuppoſition that his torments are not deſigned to continue *while God exiſts*.

Jeremiah is another inſtance much to my purpoſe; who wiſhed that he had never been born, even at the very time when he knew the Lord was his helper; only becauſe he had been put in the ſtocks by Paſhur, and had ſuffered a little pain and ſhame in a good cauſe. He was not afraid of *endleſs damnation*, nor yet of any future puniſhment: for he thus expreſſed himſelf, in all the language of full aſſurance; "But JEHOVAH is with me, as "a mighty terrible One: therefore, my perſecut- "ors ſhall ſtumble, and they ſhall not prevail; "they ſhall be greatly aſhamed, for they ſhall not "proſper; their everlaſting confuſion ſhall never "be forgotten. But, O JEHOVAH of Hoſts, that "trieſt the righteous, and ſeeſt the reins and the "heart, let me ſee thy vengeance on them (*or*, thou wilt let me ſee, &c.) for unto thee have I "opened my cauſe. Sing unto JEHOVAH, praiſe "ye JEHOVAH: for he hath delivered the ſoul of "the poor from the hand of evil doers." How ſtrong his faith! how full his aſſurance! Yet it is evident, that he thought it would have been much better for him, perſonally, never to have been born; for he immediately adds, "Curſed be "the day wherein I was born; let not the day "wherein my mother bare me, be bleſſed. Curſ- "ed be the man who brought tidings to my fa- "father, ſaying, A man child is born unto thee, "making him very glad. And let that man be "as the cities which JEHOVAH overthrew, and re-

"pented

" pented not: And let him hear the cry in the " morning, and the ſhouting at noon-tide; be- " cauſe he ſlew me not from the womb: or that " my mother might have been my grave: and her " womb to be always great with me. Wherefore " came I out of the womb, to ſee labour and ſor- " row, that my days ſhould be conſumed with " ſhame?" See Jer. xx. 11——18.

Here is not a word about a ſtate of future puniſhment, much leſs *endleſs damnation*, and yet the good prophet Jeremiah thought, that if he had never been born, it would have been far better for him.

Friend. I muſt confeſs, I never before conſidered it poſſible to anſwer this objection; you have done much towards ſolving it: but you muſt conſider, that both Job and Jeremiah paſſionately exclaimed, and, through ſorrow, uttered ſuch raſh words, as, in their cooler moments, they repented of; and therefore, what they ſpake of themſelves cannot wholly ſet aſide the objection. Had they delivered thoſe expreſſions as general truths, and declared, that men had much better never have been born, than to have ſuffered ſuch degrees of worldly ſorrow, it would have more than anſwered the objection; but, when men under grief exclaim in ſuch a manner, we cannot ground a matter of ſuch importance upon what they ſay reſpecting themſelves; as their minds, being overwhelmed with trouble, and the immediate ſenſations of pain, are biaſſed, and cannot utter the calm dictates of ſober reaſon. But Chriſt, though under great ſorrows himſelf, ſaw the caſe of Judas ſo deplorable, that he expreſſed himſelf thus reſpecting him; which was the ſober truth, without exaggeration; and could this be ſaid of him, or of any other of the human race, upon the ſuppoſition that miſery is not abſolutely endleſs?

Miniſter.

Miniſter. We do not find that Job or Jeremiah ever recanted, in their cooler moments, what they uttered in their ſorrows; and our Lord, ſpeaking of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, ſays, "And woe "unto them that are with child, and to them that "give ſuck in thoſe days," See St. Matth. xxiv. 19. St. Mark, xiii. 17. Not becauſe of their future, endleſs damnation, in diſtinction from others; but on account of their preſent trouble and ſorrow; as is explained, Luke xxi. 23. "But, woe "to them that are with child, and to them that "give ſuck, in thoſe days: for there ſhall be great "diſtreſs in the land, and wrath upon this people." And when the Saviour was led to death, we read, "And there followed him a great company of "people, and of women, who alſo bewailed and "lamented him. But Jeſus, turning unto them, "ſaid, Daughters of Jeruſalem, weep not for me, "but for yourſelves, and for your children. For "behold the days are coming, in the which they "ſhall ſay, Bleſſed are the barren, and the wombs "that never bare, and the paps which never gave "ſuck. Then ſhall they ſay to the mountains, Fall "on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they "do theſe things in a green tree, what ſhall be "done in the dry?" St. Luke, xxiii. 27——31.

And who would not, a thouſand times, chooſe rather never to have been born, than even to ſee, far leſs experience, the miſeries which came upon Jeruſalem and its inhabitants? Would it not have been better for mothers never to have been born, than to have killed and eaten their own children in the ſiege? And would it not have been better for the children never to have been born, than to have been food for their mothers?

But Solomon not only repreſents a ſtate of great miſery and affliction in this life, as worſe than not to have been born, but alſo, a ſtate of the greateſt

 proſperity,

prosperity, if it ends in disgrace; for he says, "If "a man beget an hundred children, and live many "years, so that the days of his years be many, "and his soul be not filled with good; and also, "that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely "birth is better than he. For he (the untimely "birth) cometh in with vanity, and departeth in "darkness; and his name shall be covered with "darkness. Moreover, he hath not seen the sun, "nor known any thing: this hath more rest than "the other. Yea, though he live a thousand "years twice told, yet hath he seen no good:" (*i. e.* no equivalent good, to balance his disgrace). "Do not all go to one place?" All came from dust, and turn to dust again. See Eccles. vi. 3, 4, 5, 6.

The state here described by Solomon, is not only infinitely better than the damnation of hell, though limited by certain periods; but far preferable to many, if not to most situations of men in this life: and yet he prefers an untimely birth to a man who lives more than twice the age of Methuselah, and has an hundred children of his own, if he has not his soul filled or satisfied with good; and that he hath no burial, or has not honour, (credit, *or* reputation) at his death.

Long life and *many children*, were formerly esteemed as the greatest of blessings: but as the things of this life cannot fill the soul with good; so a man had better never have been born, than to have enjoyed the good things of this world in the greatest profusion, if he dies in disgrace, and has no burial, or is not honoured at his death. Yet, this is not worthy to be named in the same day with the damnation of hell; yet, is frequently threatened as a great and terrible judgment; which, if it falls upon a man, however he may have enjoyed long life, health, wealth, and all kinds of prosperity; it makes it worse for him than

than if he had never been born, according to the decision of God himself; and, therefore, no wonder that Christ said of wicked Judas, "Good were "it for that man, if he had never been born."

Though I have answered you so largely, yet one word might have sufficed to have answered the whole objection at first; *viz.* Had Judas died before he had been born, and perished from his mother's womb, he would never have sinned, far less betrayed Christ; he would have entered into peace immediately, "where the wicked cease from "troubling, and where the weary are at rest:" In that case, he would have escaped the judgment that came upon him, and would have had more rest than those who should live in all the affluence of life two thousand years, and beget each an hundred children, and yet should not be honoured at their death.

Some would have answered the objection shorter, by saying, Christ promised twelve thrones to his twelve apostles, among whom Judas was one; and therefore, he must be restored, or the promise cannot be fulfilled: See St. Matth. xix. 28. But this I do not insist upon; nevertheless, those who answer the objection this way, make an observation that may be worth attention; *viz.* that Peter, speaking of Judas, saith, "Let his habitation be desolate, "and let no man dwell therein;" that is, Let his mansion be reserved for him, let no man take possession of it; but "His bishopric, or office, let "another take." See Acts, i. 20. compared with Psal. lxix. 25. cix. 8. But I am rather of opinion that the desolation of the habitation of the wicked, and the want of inhabitants in their tents, respects this state, and is part of the curse pronounced upon all traitors; and may therefore in an eminent sense, be applied to Judas, and also to the rebellious nation of the Jews at large; and therefore,

as theſe words do not intend their Reſtoration, ſo neither are they any objection to it; for St. Paul applies part of the lxixth Pſalm to the Jews, as truly as St. Peter applies it to Judas: See Rom. xi. 9, 10. And yet he ſays, "I ſay then, Have "they ſtumbled, that they ſhould fall? God for- "bid: But rather, through their fall, ſalvation is "come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to "jealouſy. Now, if the fall of them be the riches "of the world, and the diminiſhing of them the "riches of the Gentiles; how much more their "fulneſs?" And thus, from the 11th verſe to the end of the chapter, goes on to ſpeak of their being again received, reconciled, and grafted again into their own olive tree; and that their blindneſs is only for a time: "And ſo all Iſrael ſhall be "ſaved: There ſhall come out of Sion a deliverer, "and ſhall turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob:" That God's covenant, or promiſe, is to take their ſins away; that they are beloved for the fathers ſakes; that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance; that, therefore, they ſhall obtain mercy at laſt; and that, for this very purpoſe, God hath concluded them all (*or* ſhut them up) in unbelief, that he might not only puniſh them thereby for their tranſgreſſions, and alſo, through their unbelief, cauſe the Gentiles to obtain mercy and ſalvation; but alſo, that he might have mercy upon all thoſe whom he had thus ſhut up in unbelief, without exception. See the whole chapter.

Here, then, are three deſigns, worthy of a God of infinite wiſdom, power and goodneſs, in this one dark diſpenſation, the rejection of the Jewiſh church and nation:——1. That he might puniſh them for their iniquity:——2. That others might come in their room, ſtand in their office, and be made partakers of their privileges: and 3. That they might be reſerved to mercy and forgiveneſs

at

at laſt. And what happened to a whole nation of traitors, might happen to an individual of that nation; and *vice verſa*.

Friend. This is a ſubject of great importance, and if you can maintain the ſyſtem you have eſpouſed, and anſwer the remaining objections that may be brought againſt it, it will moſt certainly give me pleaſure, and relieve my mind from great anxiety. I am a father of many children, and God knows the tears I have ſhed on their account, but could I receive your views with what pleaſure ſhould I look upon them!!! But I have many remaining difficulties and objections ſtill to propoſe; may God preſerve me from error and falſe doctrine, I wiſh to know what is really the truth in this matter, for above all things I dread deception.

Miniſter. I aſſure you my friend that I ſhould be as loth to deceive you, as you are to be deceived, and had I not the ſureſt confidence through the Lord of the truth and reality of this moſt glorious ſyſtem, and did I not find the higheſt ſatisfaction in it myſelf, I ſhould never preſume to hold it forth to others. But as I have an engagement that calls me elſewhere juſt now, I muſt beg you to excuſe me, hoping that in a little time I ſhall have another opportunity of hearing the remainder of your objections; and in the mean time I adviſe you to ſearch the ſcriptures, and pray God to lead you into all truth.

END OF THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

DIALOGUE

DIALOGUE III.

Friend. I AM glad to meet with you, to have ſome farther converſation upon the very important and intereſting ſubject of the final Reſtoration. Since I ſaw you laſt I have had opportunity of hearing ſome very capital objections made againſt this ſyſtem, which I beg leave to ſtate in the plaineſt and ſtrongeſt manner.

Miniſter. Your frankneſs is well pleaſing to me, and I am ready to hear whatever can be urged againſt my ſentiments, and will do my endeavour to anſwer all reaſonable objections; therefore propoſe them as ſoon as you think proper.

Friend. One grand objection that is very generally made againſt the doctrine of the Reſtoration, is, that it tends to *licentiouſneſs*; that it is the doctrine that the ſerpent preached to Eve; for we read, (Gen. iii. 4.) "And the ſerpent ſaid unto "the woman, Ye ſhall not ſurely die:" and that it is a doctrine calculated to give encouragement to the wicked to continue in their evil ways; that it is "ſaying, Peace, peace, when there is no "peace;" and that this doctrine is as dangerous as that of the wicked propheteſſes of Ezekiel's time, of whom GOD ſays, "With lies ye have "made the heart of the righteous ſad, whom I "have not made ſad; and ſtrengthened the hands "of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from "his wicked way, by promiſing him life. They "ſay unto them that deſpiſe me, JEHOVAH hath "ſaid, Ye ſhall have peace; and they ſay unto "every

"every one that walketh after the imagination of "his own heart, No evil ſhall come upon you," Jer. viii. 11. Ezek xiii. 22. Jer. xxiii. 17.

It is ſaid, that it is the nature of GOD to lay the higheſt poſſible reſtraint upon ſin, and, therefore, he has threatened it with eternal, or *endleſs* puniſhment; and this is even found too weak to prevent the prevailing of iniquity. What a flood of impiety, therefore, would overflow the world, if it ſhould be generally believed, that after ſome ages of ſuffering, mankind ſhould be reſtored to ſome degree of happineſs? Would not the reſtraints be wholly taken off from the luſts and paſſions of the wicked, if once this doctrine ſhould become prevalent? Will you be ſo kind as to give a fair and candid reply to this objection?

Miniſter. This objection is ſtated with all poſſible force, I ſhall, therefore endeavour to anſwer it as well as I can; putting in this caveat, that if I ſhould not anſwer it to your ſatisfaction, do not imagine that no ſolid anſwer can be given; but impute it to my not being ſufficiently maſter of my ſubject, or not being able to expreſs my mind ſo clearly as I could wiſh. As this objection is frequently made, and often uſed, by people who mean well, but have not conſidered the ſubject thoroughly, I ſhall be as explicit as poſſibly I can upon it.

I would firſt obſerve, that the great truths, or firſt principles, upon which the Reſtoration is founded, and from which it is derived by natural and eaſy conſequences, are far from tending to licentiouſneſs: But, in order to make this evident, it will be proper here to ſet them down in their order.

Firſt Principles, upon which the Doctrine of the final and univerſal Reſtitution is founded.

1. GOD *is the univerſal and only Creator of all:* contrary to the opinion of the *Manichees* of old, who believed the *devil* to be the creator of moſt, if not all viſible beings: The *Muggletonians*, of the laſt century, and the *Buchanites* lately, aſſert nearly the ſame ſentiments; contrary to Rev. iv. 11. Col. i. 16 Pſal. c. 3. Numb. xvi. 22. Iſai. lxiv. 8. Ezek. xviii. 4. Zech xii. 1. and a vaſt number of other Scriptures.

Now, who can ſay, that this noble thought, which St. Paul enlarges upon ſo beautifully, (Acts, xvii. 24———30.) tends, in the leaſt, to make men wicked? Does it not tend to dignify and ennoble human nature, to be told, that GOD is our Father, Creator, and Firſt Cauſe; and that we were made by his power, according to his will, and for his pleaſure; and that the *chief end* for which he made us, was, *to glorify his name, and to enjoy him for ever?*—as the Aſſembly's Catechiſm beautifully declares. This is one of the principles from which GOD himſelf deduces the certainty of the final end of wrath, as I have obſerved before:—"For I will not contend for ever, neither will I "be always wroth: for the ſpirit ſhould fail be-"fore me, and the ſouls which I have made," Iſai. lvii. 16.—Thoſe who venture to contradict their Maker, and ſay, that he *will contend for ever, and be always wroth*; ought to be able, at leaſt, to give as good a reaſon why *he will*, as he has aſſigned why *he will not*; and conſequently prove, that he hath *not made all ſouls:* which is the true foundation upon which endleſs miſery muſt be founded, and the only doctrine which is perfectly conſiſtent with it.

The poor untutored *Indians* in *America*, argued (with

(with a miſſionary that was ſent from *Sweden* to convert them) from the univerſal providence of GOD, that he, who was ſo kind a Father as to provide for their bodies all things needful, had not wholly neglected their ſouls: But this I do not inſiſt upon, though, I think, the argument has weight in it; and, certainly, the providential goodneſs of GOD, and his long-ſuffering, tends to lead men to repentance: Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

2. *The univerſal benevolence of the Deity*, or the *love* of GOD to his creatures, is one of the firſt principles from which the general Reſtoration is deduced: and who can ſay, that this leads to licentiouſneſs? If thoſe who believe that GOD loves them, in particular, find *that* conſideration the ſtrongeſt obligation on them to love him again, and to obey his will; by the ſame rule, if all the individuals of the whole human race, were to believe that GOD loved each one of them, would not the ſame cauſe produce the ſame effect? And if ſo, can this be charged as a licentious doctrine, which is expreſſly grounded upon a cauſe which powerfully operates to produce holineſs? Is there any thing like argument in this reaſoning: I know that GOD loves me, and ſeeks to do me good; therefore, I muſt hate him. What ſhould we think of a woman who ſhould leave her huſband, and do all in her power againſt him, and ſhould be able to give no better reaſon for it than the following; My huſband loves me, and I know it, and he has always loved me, and always will; and, therefore, I am determined to hate, ridicule, deſpiſe, and contemn him, and have left him for this very cauſe, and am determined never to love or obey him more? Bad as human nature is, I queſtion whether ſuch inſtances often occur. We commonly ſay, that love begets love: "We love him, be-" cauſe he firſt loved us;" ſays the Apoſtle,

1 John, iv. 19. Therefore, the doctrine of GOD's univerſal *benevolence*, cannot lead to licentiouſneſs, in any light in which it can be viewed; for, if he really loves us, he will do all in his power to bring us to love him again, and to be like him; and I am ſure, the conſideration of his love to us, goes as far as moral ſuaſion can go, to induce us to love him again, nay, the belief of it is acknowledged to be one of the ſtrongeſt motives to obedience; and the love of GOD, ſhed abroad in the heart, produces the beſt effects, and is the moſt powerful principle, and ſpring, of good and virtuous actions, that we are acquainted with. This being a firſt principle, from which the univerſal Reſtoration is concluded, we are happy to find, that "GOD is love:" and that he "ſo loved the "world, as to give his only begotten Son, that "whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, "but have everlaſting life: For, GOD ſent not his "Son into the world to condemn the world: but "that the world, through him, might be ſaved." See 1 John, iv. 16. St. John, iii. 16, 17. But it is not ſo much my buſineſs now to ſhew, that the ſentiment is ſcriptural, as to ſhew that it is not of a dangerous tendency. The following words, however, are ſo beautiful, that I take the liberty to mention them:—"But thou haſt mercy upon "all; for thou canſt do all things, and winkeſt at "the ſins of men, becauſe they ſhould amend. "For thou loveſt all the things that are, and ab-"horreſt nothing which thou haſt made: for ne-"ver wouldeſt thou have made any thing, if thou "hadſt hated it, And how could any thing have "endured, if it had not been thy will: or been "preſerved, if not called by thee? But thou ſpareſt "all; for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of "ſouls. For thine incorruptible Spirit is in all "things: Therefore chaſteneſt thou them, by

"little

"little and little, that offend, and warneſt them, "by putting them in remembrance wherein they "have offended, that leaving their wickedneſs, "they may believe on thee, O LORD. For thy "power is the beginning of righteouſneſs; and "becauſe thou art the LORD of all, it maketh "thee to be gracious unto all. But thou, O GOD, "art gracious and true: long-ſuffering, and in "mercy ordering all things. For if we ſin, we are "thine, knowing thy power; but *we will not ſin*, "knowing that we are counted thine:" Wiſdom of Solomon, xi. 23——26. xii. 1, 2, 16. xv. 1, 2. "JEHOVAH is gracious, and full of compaſſion, "ſlow to anger, and of great mercy. JEHOVAH "is good to all: and his tender mercies are over "all his works. All thy works ſhall praiſe thee, "O JEHOVAH; and thy ſaints ſhall bleſs thee," Pſal. cxlv. 8, 9, 10.

3. Another great principle, upon which the Reſtoration depends, is, *that* CHRIST *died for all*: "We ſee *Jeſus*, who was made a little lower than "the angels, for the ſuffering of death, crowned "with glory and honour; that he, by the grace "of GOD, ſhould taſte death for *every man*," (*or* ALL) Heb. ii. 9. "If *any man* ſin, we have an "Advocate with the *Father*, *Jeſus Chriſt*, the "righteous: And he is the propitiation for our "ſins; and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins "of the *whole world*," 1 John, ii. 1, 2. "For "there is one GOD, and one *Mediator* between "GOD and *men*, the *Man* CHRIST JESUS: who "gave himſelf a ranſom for *all*, to be teſtified in "due time," 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

I need not multiply paſſages to prove that *Chriſt* died for *all*; for though the *univerſality* of his *death* is not expreſſly aſſerted, in every text where it is mentioned that he died, it muſt always be underſtood; becauſe it is never denied in any place, and

is plainly, and pointedly declared in thoſe which I have quoted: And, beſides, it is evident that in the apoſtles time, the *univerſality* of the death of Chriſt was a firſt principle, univerſally acknowledged, and, therefore, St. Paul reaſons from it as ſuch; which it would have been highly prepoſterous for him to do, if that had not been the caſe: As, for example, "For the love of *Chriſt* con-"ſtraineth us; becauſe we thus judge, that if one "died for *all*," (which is not diſputed by any, and which we know to be a truth) "then were "*all* dead: And that he died for *all*; that they "who live, ſhould not henceforth live unto them-"ſelves, but unto him that died for them, and "roſe again," 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

Friend. But have you never heard it argued that *Chriſt* did not *die* for *all*, becauſe he did not *pray* for *all?*

Miniſter. I remember, when a lad, I was ſent to a neighbour's houſe, and overheard the good man, the maſter of the family, read in a book, after this manner: "*Chriſt* did not die for *all*, becauſe he "did not pray for *all:* I pray for them; I pray "not for the world, but for them which thou haſt "given me, for they are thine," St. John, xvii. 9. And I then thought the argument concluſive: But I am now at a loſs whether the author of that book meant to deceive his readers; or, whether he had never read the chapter through critically: for, had he read the 20th verſe, he would have found theſe words, which would have overthrown his hypotheſis:—"Neither pray I for theſe *alone*; "but for them *alſo*, who ſhall believe on me "through their word." If *Chriſt* had prayed for all, in the 9th verſe, for whom he died, he could not have enlarged his prayer ſo much in the 20th verſe, as to take in not them only, but all that ſhould believe on him through their word: Neither

ther does he ſtop here, but goes on to pray for thoſe that believe, in theſe words: "That they "all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and "I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us:" And, why is all this unity prayed for among believers? Surely, it hath never been accompliſhed; but it ſhall be, for this great and admirable purpoſe; *viz.* "That the *world may believe* that thou "haſt ſent me. And the glory which thou gaveſt "me, I have given them; that they may be one, "even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me; "that they may be made perfect in one, and that "the *world may know* that thou haſt ſent me, and "haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me," verſes 21, 22, 23.

Friend. But when ſhall the *world believe*, and *know* that *Chriſt* is the *Sent* of *God?*

Miniſter. When all that believe ſhall be *one*, as the *Father* and the *Son* are *one:* When the great marriage of the *Lamb* ſhall be celebrated, and his Bride ſhall be *one*, in the bond of univerſal love and fellowſhip, as the *Father* and *Son* now are: When the Church ſhall be perfected in *one*; ſhall dwell in love, and dwell in *God*, as the *Father* dwells in the *Son*, and the *Son* in the *Father:* When *Zion's* watchmen ſhall ſee eye to eye: When all believers ſhall ſpeak the ſame thing; when there ſhall be no more diviſions among them; when they ſhall be perfectly joined together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment.

This was the ſtate that St. Paul beſought the Corinthians to preſs after, and wiſhed them to attain; but he had the mortification to ſee them fall ſhort of it, as all the Chriſtian churches have, from that day to this. But when *Chriſt* ſhall give that glory and honour to his Bride, which the *Father* gave to him, and ſhall thus unite her to himſelf, in an indiſſoluble union, and the ſeveral members of

of his body, the Church, ſhall be as much united one to another, as the members of the natural body are; or, to expreſs it in his own words, "As "thou, *Father*, art in *me*, and *I* in *thee:*" When thus the Church ſhall be one, in ſpirit, love, deſign, judgment, &c. as the *Father* and *Son* are; then ſhall the *world believe*, and believing, have life; then ſhall the *world know* him, whom to know is life eternal: See verſes 2 and 3. But as this great *cauſe* has never yet exiſted, the *effect* has not yet followed; but when the *firſt* ſhall be, the *laſt* ſhall take place in conſequence.

The petitions in that moſt excellent prayer, that may, with great propriety, be called the LORD's Prayer, may be divided into four claſſes: 1. For himſelf, verſes 1ſt and 5th: 2. For his apoſtles, 9——19: 3. For them that ſhould believe, through their word, verſes 20, 21, 22, 23: And, 4. for the world, verſes 21, 23; as I have juſt obſerved, and need not add any more upon ſo plain a matter.

Friend. Proceed, if you pleaſe, to ſhew, that the doctrine of the *univerſality* of the death of *Chriſt* does not lead to licentiouſneſs.

Miniſter. It is evident that it doth not; but, on the contrary, it is the ſtrongeſt motive to all who believe it, to love and live to him who died for them, and roſe again: We *are not our own, but are bought with a price*; therefore, we are exhorted not to be the ſervants of ſin, ſlaves to our paſſions, and ſervants to men: but to glorify GOD in our bodies and ſpirits, which are his: and the apoſtle beſeeches us, by the mercies of GOD, to preſent our bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto GOD; which is our reaſonable ſervice. Foraſmuch, as we know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold; but with the precious blood of *Chriſt*, as of a *Lamb* without

without blemiſh, and without ſpot: See 2 Cor. v. 15, Rom. vi. 12, 13. 1 Cor. vii. 23. vi. 19, 20. Rom. xii. 1. 1 Peter, i. 18, 19.

What a horrid thought would it be, that *Chriſt* ſhould be the miniſter of ſin, and that his blood-ſhedding ſhould cauſe wickedneſs to abound! The love of GOD, in giving his *Son* to die, is enough to move an heart of ſtone; "For when "we were yet without ſtrength, in due time, "*Chriſt* died for the ungodly: for, ſcarcely for a "righteous man will one die; yet, peradventure, "for a good (kind, benevolent, generous) man, "ſome would even dare to die. But GOD com-"mendeth his love towards us, in that, while we "were yet ſinners, *Chriſt* died for us. Much "more, being now juſtified through his blood, "we ſhall be ſaved from wrath through him. For "if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to "GOD by the death of his *Son*; much more, being "reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life," Rom. v. 6——10.

Here the death of the *Lord Jeſus* is laid as the ground, and the ſalvation of men inferred from it, with the greateſt poſſible certainty; yet, will any one ſay, that becauſe *Chriſt* hath died for him, therefore he will indulge himſelf in ſin? God forbid. Some ſay that if they believed this doctrine, they would live in ſin, and indulge themſelves in their luſts and paſſions: but then it may be obſerved, that thoſe who ſay ſo are its enemies, and thoſe who oppoſe the view, and not thoſe who receive it.

There is ſomething ſo brutiſh and unaccountable in ſuch diſpoſitions, as would lead men to hate their beſt friends, merely becauſe they are ſo; that would lead them to hate GOD, becauſe he loved them; and deſpiſe *Chriſt*, merely becauſe he died for them; that, for the honour of human nature

nature, I would hope, these instances are rare. But to the point. I have conversed with many who believed that *Christ* died for them in particular; and yet I never heard them say, that they hated him for it; but, on the contrary, that they loved him exceedingly. Now, is not the same cause likely to produce the same effect? If a thousand persons, for instance, all believing that *Christ* died for them, find their hearts constrained to love him for it, would it not have the same effect upon ten thousand, ten millions, or ten millions of millions? And if it would cause licentiousness to abound in the world, to preach that *Christ* died for all, if it was universally believed; by the same rule, it must cause it to prevail, in a lesser degree, to preach that he died for a small part, at least, among those who believe themselves to be of the number; and, therefore, it must not be preached at all, that he died for any: Who can deny the consequence? It seems to be evident, that *Christ* has done and suffered too much for those that he died for, to lose them finally: and thus the universal Restoration stands connected necessarily with the universality of the death of *Christ*, and is deduced therefrom, in the easiest manner; therefore, the doctrine of the *former* cannot tend to licentiousness, as it stands upon the ground of the *latter*, which hath been demonstrated to have no such tendency.

4. Another principle upon which the universal doctrine depends, is, *the unchangeableness of God*: Whom he loves once, he always loves; he loved his creatures when he made them, as none can well deny; their sins he never loved, nor ever will; he hath declared, that he loved us when sinners, but never *as* sinners. His eternal and constant hatred of all sin, and his unchangeable love of all his creatures, are of the nature of primary truths; from which the doctrine of the general

general Reſtoration may be eaſily and plainly inferred. In this view we may underſtand thoſe many dreadful threatenings and gracious promiſes, made to the ſame people and perſons: Both ſhall be fulfilled; the firſt, while they continue as rebels, which are deſigned to humble and ſubdue them; the laſt, when they ſhall have accepted of the puniſhment of their iniquity; when their uncircumciſed hearts are humbled, when their ſtubborn knees ſhall bow to JEHOVAH, and their former rebellious tongues ſhall ſwear allegiance to him.

Does this idea lead to licentiouſneſs, that GOD hates ſin, and determines to purſue it to entire deſtruction, and never to put up his ſword, ſo long as there is a rebel in the univerſe; yet, at the ſame time, has no poſitive hatred to the ſouls which he has made, but only wiſhes them to return to order?—This idea appears to me, equally to check preſumption and deſpair; and tends to put an end to licentiouſneſs, rather than to encourage it: For, if rebels are aſſured that their rightful ſovereign hates them, and will never ſuffer them to be reconciled to him, it naturally cauſes them to fight with tenfold rage, as all warriors will teſtify; as, on the other hand, if they believe he is too weak, or undetermined, to conquer them, they will be preſumptuous, and continue the war. It cannot, therefore, be affirmed, by any perſons of reaſon, that the declaration that GOD will deſtroy ſin, tends to promote it; or, that his love of order, and hatred of evil, being compatible with his love to the creatures he has made, is a doctrine that encourages men to rebel; the contrary is evident: and yet theſe are the very grounds of the univerſal Reſtoration; which cannot, therefore, be licentious.

5. Another of the firſt principles of the Reſtoration, is, the *immutability of* GOD's *counſels*; which he hath confirmed by an oath, "That by two immutable things, (*viz.* his word and oath) in which "it was impoſſible for GOD to lie, we might have "a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge, "to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us," Heb. vi. 17, 18. "GOD hath abounded toward us in "all wiſdom and prudence, having made known "unto us the myſtery of his will, according to his "good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf. That in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of "times, he might gather together (*or* rehead) in "one, all things in *Chriſt*, both which are in "heaven, and which are on earth: even in him: "in whom we have obtained an inheritance, being "predeſtinated according to the purpoſe of him "who worketh *all things* according to the counſel "of his own WILL," Epheſ. i. 8, 9, 10, 11. "GOD is our Saviour, (*or Soteros*, Reſtorer) who "will have all men to be ſaved, (*ſothenai*, reſtored) "and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. This is the will and counſel of that GOD, who "doeth according to his will in "the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants "of the earth; and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay "unto him, What doeſt thou?" Dan. iv. 35. He hath ſworn by himſelf, the word is gone out of his mouth in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that unto him "every knee ſhall bow, every tongue "ſhall ſwear," Iſai. xlv. 23. The counſel of GOD ſhall ſtand; he will perform his pleaſure, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition that men can make: "GOD is not a man, that he ſhould lie, neither the "ſon of man, that he ſhould repent: Hath he ſaid, "and ſhall he not do it? or, hath he ſpoken, and "ſhall he not make it good?" Numb. xxiii. 19. If GOD will have all men to be ſaved, or reſtored, and

and to come to the knowledge of the truth, if it is his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf, in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, to rehead all things in *Chriſt*, both in heaven and on earth; if he hath ſworn, that unto him every knee ſhall bow, and every tongue ſhall ſwear; and if he worketh all things after the counſel of his own will, and is determined to perform all his pleaſure, which he is able to do; and with him nothing that he pleaſes is impoſſible: I ſay, if all theſe things are true, (as who, that believes the Scriptures, can deny?) then, is not the doctrine of the Reſtoration true? And who will venture to charge that with licentiouſneſs, which GOD, in the counſel of his will, hath purpoſed, and is determined to perform? We know, the will of GOD is a will to all goodneſs, and that he cannot do any thing unjuſt, or contrary to his holy nature, or inconſiſtent with his plan of moral government, or that ſhall tend to promote rebellion; therefore, if GOD had ſeen that this great work had been, in any reſpect, injurious to his perfections, character, government, &c. he would not have propoſed it; and if he had foreſeen that the knowledge of it would have been hurtful to mankind, he would not have revealed it: But ſince he hath done both, we may certainly argue, that it is not a licentious doctrine to declare, that GOD will finally make all his intelligent creatures happy; by making them all his ſubjects, by deſtroying their ſins, and making them holy, in a way perfectly conſiſtent with all his perfections and attributes; without doing the leaſt injury to his character, or rendering his moral government weak, or making any of his words void, whether threatenings or promiſes, or in the leaſt ſetting aſide the ſanctions of his law or goſpel, or a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments; without derogating at all from the

glory of the Mediator, but rather exalting it to the higheſt poſſible pitch; without ſaddening the hearts of the righteous, or diminiſhing, in the leaſt, from the happineſs of Heaven, but rather cauſing it to increaſe; for if there is joy in Heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, there muſt be more over many, in exact proportion; and as God will certainly give the greateſt poſſible joy to his choſen, and there is no doubt but it will receive addition from every one that is reſtored, or brought home to himſelf; therefore, it can only be brought to its higheſt poſſible pitch by the *univerſal Reſtoration*: which doctrine cannot, therefore, be licentious, as God has appointed and revealed it, and all holy beings (except ſome weak good men on earth) rejoice therein exceedingly.

6. Another of the principles on which the *general Reſtoration* is founded, is, *that* God *hath given all things into the hand of* Chriſt, who hath declared, *that it is the Father's will, that of all that he gave him, he ſhould loſe nothing*: and that power was given him over all, that he ſhould give the knowledge of God, even eternal life, to all that the *Father* had given him; and that *all*, without exception, whom the *Father* hath given, ſhall come in ſuch a manner as not to be caſt out: But as all theſe Scriptures have been recited, and reaſoned upon before, I ſhall only now obſerve, that as GOD the FATHER hath given *all* things to CHRIST, and as he hath engaged to bring *all* back, without exception, and hath both *will* and *power* to perform this work, and came into the world on purpoſe to accompliſh it, it muſt, of conſequence, be finally performed; yet, it cannot tend to licentiouſneſs, or the God of Heaven, and the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, would never have planned it, approved of it, or ſought to execute it.

Many more firſt principles, on which the doctrine of

the *Reſtoration* is founded, might be mentioned, and ſhewn to be far from tending to licentiouſneſs: but I ſhall mention but one more; and that is—*The Scriptures muſt be fulfilled; the Scriptures cannot be broken:* None of the words of God can fail of being accompliſhed; and he hath not only denounced dreadful threatenings, but made many gracious promiſes to the ſame people: Theſe cannot be fulfilled together; and, if there is no truth in the Reſtoration, I cannot ſee how the *latter* will ever be fulfilled at all; and if ſins are not puniſhed in the perſons who commit them, I am equally at a loſs what ſenſe or truth can there be in the *former*. It would be a great taſk to collect all the texts which juſtify the remark, that threatenings and promiſes belong to the ſame people in different periods, ſome ſpecimens of which have been given in the courſe of theſe dialogues. Now, it cannot lead to licentiouſneſs, to ſuppoſe that the Scriptures ſhall all be fulfilled; but it muſt lead to infidelity, and all kinds of evil, to ſuppoſe the contrary.

Theſe are the firſt principles upon which the doctrine of the Reſtoration ſtands, and by which it is ſupported; and as theſe have all been conſidered, and proved to have no tendency to encourage ſin, ſeparately, much leſs can they have any ſuch tendency, jointly; and then it evidently follows, that a doctrine which ſeems neceſſarily deduced, or inferred by undeniable conſequences, from all theſe conſiderations united, cannot be falſe, or have any evil tendency.

But I ſhall next proceed to ſhew, that all true, experimental, and practical religion, ſeems ſo conſiſtent with the *univerſal Reſtoration*, that it may be reckoned a wonder, that all who have taſted that the Lord is gracious, and have diligently practiſed his commands, have not, in all ages, been fully convinced of the truth of it.

Friend.

Friend. Is it poſſible that you can do this? If ſo, I hope your reaſoning will be attended to; and I muſt confeſs, that you have cleared your way ſo well, by conſidering the firſt principles of the doctrine, and ſhewing that they are very far from tending to licentiouſneſs, that I am half inclined to think you will be able to anſwer this objection, formidable as it has been conſidered hitherto.

Miniſter. As I truſt you have been made acquainted with experimental religion, I need only to appeal to your own experience, for the truth of what I advance; and I am apt to think, if you will anſwer me candidly, to a few queſtions, you muſt acknowledge either that the Reſtoration is true, or that your experience is falſe.

Friend. I am willing to give you as plain and candid anſwers as I can; for it will be of no uſe to deny what the Lord has done for my ſoul.

Miniſter. Let me then aſk you, in the firſt place, Did you not ſee yourſelf loſt and undone; and that you were vile before God, unworthy of his mercy, and totally unable to deliver yourſelf from your ſin and miſery?

Friend. I certainly did; and I was ſometimes ready to think there was hardly ſuch a ſinner on earth as myſelf, all circumſtances conſidered; for I had ſinned againſt ſuch light and love, that I thought all the world might be forgiven ſooner than myſelf.

Miniſter. And were you not brought by the power of God, to reſign yourſelf into his hands, without reſerve, to do with you, and diſpoſe of you, according to his will and pleaſure; being convinced, that he neither would nor could do you any injuſtice?

Friend. O yes; and then I found peace; my rebellion againſt God ceaſed; I looked upon him quite different from what I did before; I ſaw that he

he was wholly right and juſt, and that I was entirely to blame: my murmurings againſt him ceaſed; I viewed him as ſuch a holy, good, merciful, and yet righteous God, that I could truſt my ſoul in his hands, with the moſt entire ſatisfaction.

Miniſter. And when *Chriſt* was revealed to you as a *Saviour*, how did he appear?

Friend. As one able and mighty to ſave, even to the uttermoſt; and I thought there was not only a ſufficiency in him for me, the vileſt of all, but for the whole world, yea, for a thouſand worlds, had there been ſo many. His blood ſeemed to me ſo precious, his obedience and ſufferings ſo meritorious, his power ſo great, his love ſo rich, boundleſs, and free, that I was overcome with the tranſporting view; and as I ſaw in him a fulneſs for all, ſo I found in him an infinite willingneſs to ſave all; for how could I think otherwiſe? I knew myſelf to be moſt unworthy, and that he had graciouſly pitied me: I beheld his love, like a river, flowing down to me as free as water: and I was amazed that I had not beheld it before, in the ſame light. I ſaw, that the love of God to me, did not now *begin*, but was now *manifeſted* to my ſoul. I ſaw that there was no change in God, but all in myſelf. Thoſe words were precious to my heart at that time: "Yea, I have loved thee with "an everlaſting love; therefore with loving-kind-"neſs have I drawn thee," Jer. xxxi. 3. As alſo theſe: "Son, be of good cheer; thy ſins be for-"given thee," St. Matth. ix. 2.

Miniſter. You have brought my own experience to my mind:—It pleaſed GOD, by an incident too trifling to mention, to bring me to ſeek earneſtly for an unfading treaſure; and, by a train of circumſtances, fixed the concern deeply upon my mind; and I laboured night and day, but could obtain no reſt, till one morning—a time never to be

be forgotten!—as I was walking on a journey, under great diſtreſs, and when deliverance ſeemed farther from me than ever, all at once, I was brought to reſign my ſoul into the hands of GOD, and thus I expreſſed myſelf: "Lord, here I am; "a poor helpleſs ſinner: I reſign myſelf into "thine hands; take me, and deal with me, juſt as "thou pleaſeſt: I know thou canſt do me no in-"juſtice." Immediately theſe words came into my mind, with great power and ſweetneſs: "In "an acceptable time have I heard thee; and in a "day of ſalvation have I helped thee," Iſai. xlix. 8. and I had then ſuch a view of CHRIST, as made me to cry out 'Glory to God in the higheſt! This is ſalvation; I know this is ſalvation!' Then thoſe paſſages which you have mentioned, came into my mind with great energy; and I ſaw the fulneſs, ſufficiency, and willingneſs of CHRIST to ſave me, and all men, in ſuch a manner as conſtrained me to venture my ſoul into his arms; and if I had had ten thouſand ſouls, I could have truſted them all in his hands. And, O how did I long, that every ſoul of Adam's race might come to know the love of God in CHRIST JESUS! And I thought, I could not be willing to live any longer on earth, unleſs it might pleaſe God to make me uſeful to my fellow-creatures.

"What peaceful hours I then enjoy'd!
"How ſweet their mem'ry ſtill!
"But they have left an aching void
"The world can never fill."

This is a little abſtract of what God did then graciouſly teach me by his Spirit; but I had been brought up in the particular ſyſtem, and in the courſe of a few years came to be ſo firmly attached to it, as to refuſe, in my preaching, to make general invitations to mankind at large; rightly reaſoning

ſoning with myſelf, that if proviſion was only made for a ſmall part, I had no warrant to call or invite the whole to come and partake; and therefore only preſſed the duty on ſuch and ſuch characters, as *hungry*, *thirſty*, *weary*, *heavy-laden*, ſuch as were *without money*, *ſenſible ſinners*, &c. all of which I concluded to be of the *elect*, becauſe I judged the Spirit had begun to operate ſavingly upon their hearts; and that to theſe, and theſe only, the Scriptures directed invitations to be made; never conſidering that text—"Hearken unto me, ye "ſtout-hearted, that are far from righteouſneſs. "I bring near my righteouſneſs; and it ſhall not "be far off, and my ſalvation ſhall not tarry," Iſa. xlvi. 12, 13. During the time that I remained in this cloſe-hearted ſyſtem, labouring with all my might to maintain it, I chanced to come to a houſe, where, as far as I can judge, was a very ſenſible and pious young woman, whom I never ſaw before or ſince: She gave a very judicious account of the work of grace upon her heart; but when ſhe came to that part, where ſhe ſaid ſhe beheld an infinite fulneſs in CHRIST for ALL the world, I interrupted her, and told her, That could not be; for there was no proviſion made for all, and therefore it was impoſſible that ſhe could have any ſuch diſcoveries made to her by the Spirit of God. This I inſiſted upon, according to my ſyſtem, contrary to my experimental knowledge; (O the miſchiefs of bigotry, prejudice, and vain attachment to ſyſtem!) ſhe, on the contrary, maintained, that ſhe clearly viewed matters in that light; and that ſhe certainly was taught to believe, that in Chriſt there was a fulneſs and freeneſs for all: This I denied; and ſhe was thereby prevented from finiſhing what ſhe had begun. I can never forgive myſelf, for the oppoſition I made to what I knew to be truth by experience; and as I did not enquire the

name of the perſon, I have had no opportunity of making a recantation by letter, as I ought to have done; and having never been in the place ſince, and it being highly improbable that ever I ſhall again, I feel myſelf extremely hurt, whenever I think of it.

Friend. I can but admire the agreement between us in matters of experience; for I found the ſame diſpoſitions of mind that you mentioned, when it pleaſed *God* to reveal his *Son* in me.

Miniſter. I never found an experienced Chriſtian in my life, but would give much the ſame account, provided that his ſyſtem was not in ſight; and I have found ſome, that though they were violently attached to the contrary ſyſtem, and knew my intention in aſking the queſtions; yet anſwered the following affirmatively.

Did you not ſee and feel yourſelves the vileſt of ſinners?

Did you not view the love of GOD infinitely full, free and unmerited?

Did you not behold in *Chriſt* an infinite fulneſs, ſufficiency, and willingneſs, to ſave all, without exception?

Did you not love all, and wiſh that all might come and partake of his grace?

Did you not earneſtly deſire the ſalvation of all, not only of your family, friends, neighbours, and nation; but alſo of your enemies, and of all mankind? Could you not embrace the whole human race in the arms of benevolence?

Did you not find it in your heart to pray for the ſalvation of all mankind, as for your own?

If you had as much power as good-will, would you not bring all to bow to the ſceptre of grace, and to be reconciled to *God* through *Jeſus Chriſt?*

Friend. I do not ſee how an experienced perſon can refuſe to ſay Yes, to all theſe queſtions; they are

are so agreeable to the very tempers of the new-born soul; and, I am sure, I found them in my heart, at the very time when I first tasted of the love of God.

Minister. Well then, my friend, let me ask you, From whence did these tempers and dispositions proceed?

Friend. To be candid, I think they were given me from above, and came down from the Father of lights, from whence every good and perfect gift cometh; and I am the more apt to think so, because I found contrary dispositions in my heart before; and the more I am sensible of the forgiving love of God, the more I find these affections which you have described, and these desires for the good of others.

Minister. Then let me ask you, Can a small drop be larger than the unfathomed abyss and ocean of Love? Have you more compassiontowards your fellow-creatures than the God that made them? Can any effect be greater than its cause? Would you bring all to submit to God, and be happy, if you could? and will not he, to whom nothing that he pleases to do is impossible, bring all his creatures to be reconciled to himself at last? He has infinitely more love to his creatures, than all the saints and angels in glory have; he is possessed of infinite power and wisdom, as well as love; all means to accomplish the work are known to him: he can do it in a way that shall cause his praise to abound exceedingly, in a way perfectly consistent with all his perfections, and the whole of his glorious character; it is his will and purpose so to do, as has been proved at large; What, then, can hinder him from fulfilling it?

Friend. I am not able to gainsay this reasoning; it seems almost undeniable: But can you shew that the doctrine of the Restoration stands connect-

ed with practical religion, or the keeping of the commandments of God?

Miniſter. I can very eaſily do that, in every inſtance; but ſhall only attend to the following, as a ſpecimen.

1. Our Lord has commanded us to *love all mankind*; not our brethren and friends only, but even our greateſt enemies; and all for this purpoſe, that we may be the children of our Father, who is in Heaven, whoſe love is univerſal, and whoſe tender mercies are over all his works: See St. Matth. v. 44—48. St. Luke, vi. 27—36. But if God doth not love all himſelf, Chriſt hath commanded us to be *more perfect*, in that reſpect, than our Father, who is in Heaven; which, to ſuppoſe, is highly abſurd. What ſhall we ſay to that doctrine that teaches us, that God hates, with a perfect hatred, many of thoſe whom he hath commanded us to love as ourſelves?

Therefore, there is nothing in the doctrine of the Reſtoration, contrary to the love of our neighbour; which on the contrary is promoted thereby.

2. We are commanded to *do good to all men*, as we have opportunity. This is recommended to us by the example of our heavenly Father, who "maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and on the "good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the "unjuſt;" and no perſon can ſay, that the belief of this doctrine tends, in the leaſt, to hinder us from doing good to all our fellow-creatures; but rather encourages us ſo to do, from the conſideration that God loves them all, and does good to all, and is determined to make them all the ſubjects of his kingdom at laſt.

3. We are commanded to *forgive all men their treſpaſſes*, and to pray; ſaying, "Forgive us our "(debts, *or*) treſpaſſes, as we forgive (our debtors, "*or*) them that treſpaſs againſt us;" St. Matth. vi. 12.

12. St. Luke, xi. 4. And our Lord ſays, " For, " if ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly " Father will alſo forgive you: But if ye forgive " not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your Father " forgive your treſpaſſes;" St. Matth. vi. 14, 15. See alſo, chap. xviii. 21—35. St. Mark, xi. 25, 26. St Luke, vi. 37.

Now, is it poſſible to ſuppoſe, with any degree of reaſon, that our Lord would command us, upon pain of his higheſt diſpleaſure, to *forgive* thoſe whom he hated, and determined to puniſh while he ſhould exiſt, without having the leaſt deſire or deſign to do them good? Has he promiſed us the greateſt bleſſings, if we will forgive all men; and will he never forgive them? He that can believe this, let him believe it. However, ſince forgiving all men is a plain command, which none can deny; I truſt, no one will venture to ſay, that believing the final Reſtoration of all men, at laſt, will have any tendency to make us break this precept of our *Saviour's*, upon which he lays ſo much ſtreſs; but, I think, the contrary is evident.

4. We are commanded to *pray for all men:* St. Paul ſays, " I exhort, therefore, that, firſt of all, " ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and giving " of thanks, be made for all men: For this is good " and acceptable in the ſight of God, our Saviour, " (*or* Reſtorer) who will have all men to be ſaved, " (*or* reſtored) and to come unto the knowledge " of the truth. For there is one God, and one " Mediator between God and men, the man *Chriſt* " *Jeſus*; who gave himſelf a ranſom for all, to be " teſtified in due time." This is the great doctrine of the goſpel, the very foundation of Chriſtianity: " Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an " apoſtle; (I ſpeak the truth in Chriſt, and lie " not) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." The apoſtle not only believed, but taught; not only taught, but commanded others to teach and preach

preach this great doctrine, of God's being the Saviour, or Reſtorer, of all men: In this he gloried, ſaying, "This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of "all acceptation. For therefore we both labour "and ſuffer reproach, becauſe we truſt in the living "God, who is the Saviour (*or* Reſtorer) of all "men, ſpecially of thoſe that believe. Theſe "things command and teach."

Upon this grand foundation, St. Paul recommends prayer to all men; ſaying, "I will there-"fore, that men pray every where, lifting up holy "hands, without wrath and doubting," 1 Tim. ii. 1—8. iv. 9, 10, 11.

Obſerve, the apoſtle recommends prayer for all men: and wills, that men ſhould pray every where, at all times, and in all places, lifting up holy hands, without *wrath* and *doubting*. How nearly forgiving all men, and praying for all men, ſtand connected! and both are plainly and peremptorily commanded by our Lord; who ſays, "Love your enemies, "bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that "hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully "uſe you, and perſecute you."

We are commanded to pray for all men, becauſe it is the will of God that all men ſhould be ſaved; (*or* reſtored) and becauſe Chriſt hath given himſelf a ranſom for all: And we are bid to pray *without doubting:* O, what a word is this! May we, ought we, to pray for the ſalvation of all men, without *doubting?* Surely, God would never have commanded us to do this, unleſs it was his purpoſe to reſtore all men, in his own time; and no man can ſay, that the belief of the Reſtoration will prevent our praying for all men.

I was once on a journey, and called in at the houſe of one of my former good friends: Several religious perſons were there; and, after ſome time, my ſentiments came to be ſpoken of, and they

ſeemed

ſeemed to wonder how I could embrace the opinion, that all men, finally, would be ſaved! I told them, however many might preach againſt it, that no perſon, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, could pray *againſt it*; but, on the contrary, we could pray *for it* in faith, nothing wavering, as God had commanded, and as his Spirit naturally inſpired: that no perſon could pray God not to ſave or reſtore all mankind, without being ſhocked at the blaſphemy and impiety of ſuch a prayer; but that our Lord had ſaid, that all things whatſoever we aſked in prayer, believing that we ſhould receive, ſhould be granted, let them be things ſeemingly ever ſo impoſſible; that if we aſked any thing according to his will, it ſhould be done; and that it was his poſitive and declared will, that all men ſhould be ſaved, (*or* reſtored) and come to the knowledge of the truth: that we were ordered to pray for it in faith, without doubting; and, therefore, it was as evident as the nature of things required, that it would be done; ſince God had never ordered us to pray for any thing that he was not able and willing to do. This, and much more, I ſaid, and they ſeemed exceedingly well ſatisfied; eſpecially, when I informed them, that it was through the blood of Chriſt, the blood of the covenant, that the priſoners ſhould be ſent forth out of the pit wherein is no water, and that all ſhould be reſtored through his mediation.

Friend. Then you hold that even the damned ſhall be finally reſtored and delivered by the power of Jeſus, and through his blood-ſhedding. I have heard it objected againſt your ſcheme, that it tended to ſet at nought the whole mediatorial plan, and to depreciate the blood of Jeſus, which he ſhed to purge our ſins away; though I never obſerved any thing like this in your diſcourſes, either in public or in private.

Miniſter.

Miniſter. No: God forbid that I ſhould ever ſet aſide the blood that cleanſeth from all ſin; nor can I be charged with it, unleſs having a much higher idea of its merit than my oppoſers, may be looked upon as tending to depreciate it. They hold that it ſhall cleanſe a ſmall number from their ſins; I believe that it ſhall cleanſe, heal, and reſtore the whole human race. They believe that its virtue endures for a little ſeaſon; I maintain that it ſhall continue to all ages, until all evil ſhall be deſtroyed out of the univerſe.

Friend. I am ſatisfied that you do not mean to ſet at nought the powerful blood of the dear Redeemer, but on the contrary, you ſuppoſe that your views tend more to exalt it. Pray proceed in your diſcourſe.

Miniſter. I need not ſay much more upon this matter: Our *Saviour* has ſaid, "If any man will "do his (the Father's) will, he ſhall know of the "doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I "ſpeak of myſelf," St. John, vii. 17. This is the ſureſt rule: practice religion; love, revere, and ſerve God; love all men, even your enemies; do good to all, forgive all, and pray for all; and then aſk, Is the doctrine of the final Reſtoration contrary to this manner of life? If it be, reject it; for theſe commands are plain: and if theſe principles are inconſiſtent with the obſervation of theſe precepts, then avoid them, as you would death and hell. But, I truſt, it has been ſhewn, that they have no ſuch tendency; but the contrary. For inſtance, Does this doctrine tend to make us hate God, and his character? Does it naturally fill our minds with *ſelfiſhneſs*, and prevent *benevolence* from ruling within us? Does it fill us with *pride*, and cauſe us to look down with contempt upon thoſe that are beneath us in life, and baniſh *humility* from our hearts? Does the belief of this, cauſe our breaſts

to

to ſwell with pale *envy*, and rancorous malice, at the happineſs of others? Does it cauſe us to burn with helliſh *rage*, fury, and madneſs, againſt mankind? Does it tend to deſtroy *meekneſs*, and increaſe *wrath?* If theſe queſtions require (either from the nature of things, or from known facts) the anſwers to be in the affirmative; then I would abhor ſuch a ſyſtem, and wiſh it to be univerſally deteſted: But if, on the contrary, the candid enquirer muſt anſwer in the negative, and ſay, That the doctrine of the final Reſtoration does not tend to produce *ſelfiſhneſs*, *envy*, *pride*, or *wrath*; but, on the contrary, "Glory to God in the higheſt, and "on earth peace, good-will towards men;" that it cauſes *benevolence*, *meekneſs*, *humility*, *forbearance*, *forgiveneſs*, *charity*, and all *goodneſs*, to abound and increaſe; then it cannot be a licentious doctrine, and is not to be diſcarded on that account; for it is a maxim with St. John, that "He that loveth "his brother, abideth in the light, and there is "none occaſion of ſtumbling in him," 1 John, ii. 10. That is, he cannot receive, hold, maintain, or do, any thing eſſentially or materially wrong; and, therefore, can give no juſt occaſion of offence: "For, all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in "this; Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf. "For he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the "law. For this, Thou ſhalt not commit adultery, "Thou ſhalt not kill, Thou ſhalt not ſteal, Thou "ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs, Thou ſhalt not co-"vet; and if there be any other commandment, "it is briefly comprehended in this ſaying: Thou "ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf. Love "worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore, love "is the fulfilling of the law," Gal. v. 14. Rom. xiii. 8, 9, 10.

But it is not only from reaſoning, but from facts, that I am able to prove that the belief of the doc-

trine of the univerſal Reſtoration, does not lead men to ſin. The Tunkers, or German Baptiſts, in Pennſylvania, and the ſtates adjacent, who take the Scriptures as their only guide, in matters both of faith and practice, have always (as far as I know) received, and univerſally, at preſent, hold theſe ſentiments: But ſuch Chriſtians I have never ſeen as they are; ſo averſe are they to all ſin, and to many things that other Chriſtians eſteem lawful, that they not only refuſe to ſwear, go to war, &c. but are ſo afraid of doing any thing contrary to the commands of Chriſt, that no temptation would prevail upon them even to ſue any perſon at law, for either name, character, eſtate, or any debt, be it ever ſo juſt: They are induſtrious, ſober, temperate, kind, charitable people; envying not the great, nor deſpiſing the mean: They read much, they ſing and pray much, they are conſtant attendants upon the worſhip of God; their dwelling-houſes are all houſes of prayer: They walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs, both in public and private: They bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; no noiſe of rudeneſs, ſhameleſs mirth, loud, vain laughter, is heard within their doors: The law of kindneſs is in their mouths: no fourneſs, or moroſeneſs, diſgraces their religion; and whatſoever they believe their Saviour commands, they practiſe, without enquiring or regarding what others do.

I remember the Rev. Morgan Edwards, formerly miniſter of the Baptiſt Church in Philadelphia, once ſaid to me, "God always will have a viſible people on earth; and theſe are his people at preſent, above any other in the world." And in his Hiſtory of the Baptiſts in Pennſylvania, ſpeaking of theſe people, he ſays: "General redemption they certainly held, and, withal, general

" neral ſalvation; which tenets (though wrong) " are conſiſtent. In a word, they are meek and " pious Chriſtians; and have juſtly acquired the " character of *The harmleſs Tunkers.*"

Thus have I proved that this doctrine is not licentious; both from the firſt principles on which it is founded, from the nature of experimental and practical religion, and from facts. As to that part of the objection, which ſuppoſes this doctrine to be the ſame that the ſerpent preached to Eve, ſaying, " Ye ſhall not ſurely die;" it ſeems almoſt unworthy of notice: But as it has been gloried in by ſome writers, as unanſwerable, merely becauſe it was paſſed over unnoticed, as being nothing to the purpoſe; I ſhall make a few remarks upon it.

1. I ſay, that *Satan* was a liar, and GOD was true: For man and woman did *die*, in a *moral* ſenſe, on the very day that they ſinned; they became dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; they loſt the divine life, and became earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh; darkneſs in their underſtandings, ſtubbornneſs in their wills, and diſorder in their affections, rendered them unfit, unable and unworthy, to have fellowſhip with their God. But do they contradict JEHOVAH, and join with the ſerpent, who aſſert, that JESUS, the ſecond *Adam*, hath quickened, and is able to quicken, thoſe who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins? If ſo, St. Paul joined with the ſerpent, in Epheſ. ii. 1.

2. The ſentence of death was pronounced upon man, even the death of the body, in thoſe words: " In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till " thou return unto the ground; for out of it waſt " thou taken: for duſt thou art, and unto duſt " thou ſhalt return," Gen. iii. 19. But, would it be juſt and right for any one to ſay, that thoſe who believed the reſurrection of the body, con-

tradicted God, and, joining with the ſerpent, declared, that men ſhould not die; merely, becauſe they aſſerted, according to the promiſes, that they ſhould riſe again? Would not thoſe who preach *Jeſus*, and the reſurrection, have a right to look upon it as a vile and wilful ſlander, if any one ſhould ſo miſrepreſent the matter? What! muſt I be accuſed of ſaying, that no man ever died, becauſe I believe and teach, that ſome have riſen, and that all ſhall be raiſed, at laſt: when even the very idea of a reſurrection, preſuppoſes a ſtate of death?

3. I confeſs, that God has threatened ſinners with the ſecond death: but do I ſay, that they ſhall never taſte of the ſecond death, becauſe I declare, that the time will come when it ſhall exiſt no more? This is curious reaſoning, indeed. As well may I ſay, that no man ever lived on earth, becauſe ſo many have died; that no one ſleeps in the night, who wakes in the morning; or, that no fiſh was ever in the water, that was caught and taken out.

Did St. Paul join with the ſerpent, when he ſaid, "For as in *Adam* all die, even ſo in CHRIST ſhall "all be made alive?" 1 Cor. xv. 22. Will any ſuppoſe that we affirm, that the dreadful threatenings denounced by God, never were, nor ever will be executed, becauſe we declare, that his promiſes ſhall alſo be fulfilled? Can any reaſonable man ſuppoſe, becauſe Chriſt is the Saviour of men, that, therefore, they were not in a loſt condition? How abſurd! when he declares, that he came to ſeek and to ſave the loſt!

Thus, though mankind died a moral death, in the day wherein they ſinned; yet, CHRIST is able to quicken and raiſe them up from the ſame: and though their bodies die, in conſequence of the fall; yet ſhall he cauſe all that are in the graves, to hear his

his voice, and come forth: and, by the ſame rule of arguing, though many ſhall fall under the power of the ſecond death, which is threatened to ſinners; yet as he has promiſed to deſtroy all that bears the name of *death*, their Reſtoration may be fairly concluded, without either contradicting God, or joining with the ſerpent. Had the Scriptures, indeed, contained nothing but threatenings of *death*, without any promiſes of *ſalvation*, *reſurrection*, or *reſtoration*; it would have been preſumptuous for us to have entertained any hopes for the human race, or their deliverance, either from *ſin*, *death*, or *hell*: but, ſince *promiſes* are found, as well as *threatenings*, we muſt not, under pretence or colour of believing the *latter*, reject the *former*, leſt we are found contradictors and oppoſers of God; for it is as poſſible that we may make him a liar, in refuſing to believe the record he has given of his Son, and his intentions of grace and mercy towards mankind, as in diſregarding his threatenings, denounced againſt them becauſe of their ſins.

As for this doctrine making the *hearts of the righteous ſad whom* GOD *would not have made ſad*, nothing can be more contrary to fact; for if it be the will of God to reward and puniſh, and finally to reſtore mankind, none of the righteous will be ſorry, but, on the contrary, will greatly rejoice. It is not God's truth, but women's lies, of which the prophet ſpeaks; which made the hearts of the righteous ſad, and ſtrengthened the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way, by promiſing him life: But we are ſo far from ſtrengthening the hands of the wicked, and ſaying, that no evil ſhall come upon them; that we declare from the Scripture, that "the wrath of "God is revealed from Heaven, againſt all un-"godlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, who hold "the

" the truth in unrighteouſneſs; unto them that are " contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey " unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath, tribula- " tion and anguiſh, upon every ſoul of man that " doeth evil; of the Jew firſt, and alſo of the " Gentile," Rom. i. 18. ii. 8, 9. And that " there " is no peace to the wicked," Iſai. xlviii. 22. lvii. 20, 21. Therefore, they are called to repent, and turn to God; for in ſin they never can be happy: no unholy, or unclean thing can enter into the kingdom of Heaven. And ſo far are we from promiſing them life in their wicked ways, that we teſtify, from the Scripture, that " He that be- " lieveth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life," while he continues in that ſtate; " but the wrath of God " abideth on him," St. John, iii. 36.

Friend. I had intended to propoſe that text as an objection to your ſyſtem; it is, indeed, one that Dr. WHITBY inſiſts much upon: But I ſee how you will anſwer it—that the unbeliever, as ſuch, *and while he ſo continues*, cannot ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him, while he remaineth in unbelief; but that God can take away the cauſe, in his own time, and then the effect ſhall ceaſe.

Miniſter. Certainly, this muſt be the meaning; for St. John only meant to deſcribe the difference between believers and unbelievers, *as ſuch*; but could not mean to intimate, that thoſe who were unbelievers, in his time, ſhould always continue ſo.

But I now paſs to conſider the latter part of this objection, upon which I have dwelt ſo long; *viz.* that it is the nature of God to lay the higheſt poſſible reſtraint upon ſin, and, therefore he has threatened it with *everlaſting damnation*, which muſt intend *endleſs miſery*; and as this reſtraint is found too weak, wholly to prevent evil, what an amazing increaſe would there be, if this reſtraint ſhould

ſhould be taken off, in any degree; as it muſt be, if it ſhould come to be known that puniſhments were only *for certain ages or periods*, and deſigned for the *amendment* of the ſufferers?

I once aſked a Reverend Divine, what was his ſtrongeſt argument in favour of *endleſs puniſhment?* and he told me, this which is mentioned above; and, therefore as it is of conſiderable importance, I ſhall give it a brief conſideration.

1. It is not quite clear to me, that it is the nature of God to lay the higheſt poſſible reſtraint upon ſin; and that he always doth ſo, in all his diſpenſations. He ſometimes has higher deſigns in view, than barely to reſtrain ſin: he ſometimes, perhaps, ſuffers it to prevail for a time, that his power might be more manifeſt in deſtroying it: hence we read, "Moreover, the law entered"—not merely to reſtrain ſin, but—"that the offence "might abound: but where ſin abounded, grace "did much more abound; that as ſin hath reigned "unto death, even ſo might grace reign, through "righteouſneſs, unto eternal life, by *Jeſus Chriſt* "our Lord. Wherefore, then, ſerveth the law? "It was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the "ſeed ſhould come, to whom the promiſe was "made," Rom. v. 20, 21, Gal. iii. 19. St. Paul ſays; "Sin, taking occaſion by the command-"ment, wrought in me all manner of concupiſ-"cence; for, without the law, ſin was dead. "Was, then, that which was good, made death "unto me? God forbid: But ſin, that it might "appear ſin, working death in me, by that which "is good; that ſin, by the commandment, might "become exceeding ſinful," Rom. vii. 8, 13. Perhaps, if the puniſhment of ſins immediately followed the commiſſion of them, it would be a ſtronger and more effectual reſtraint than any threatenings of future miſery; yet God does not think

think it neceſſary to reſtrain ſin by that mean, though it is expreſſly aſſerted, that, "Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore is the heart of the ſons of men fully ſet in them to do evil." Eccleſ. viii. 11. There is no doubt but if the awful puniſhments of the future ſtate were made viſible to our ſenſes, by any means, they would prove a powerful reſtraint to ſin; yet God has not thought fit to reſtrain it by thoſe, and perhaps many other poſſible ways; Wherefore, I have a right to doubt the premiſes; for, if the ſtrongeſt poſſible reſtraints were laid upon ſin, it might not be ſo conſiſtent with a ſtate of probation, as thoſe reaſonable reſtraints which God hath thought fit to lay upon it.

2. But it may be queſtioned, whether there is not ſomething in the idea of limited, yet certain puniſhment, ſo juſt, equitable, reaſonable, and evident; that is much more calculated to produce belief, and conſequently more effectual to deſtroy falſe hopes of eſcaping it, and alſo to check that daring preſumption, which riſes out of the idea of *endleſs miſery*; than can be found in the contrary doctrine. *Endleſs puniſhment* ſeems to ſhock tender minds, at leaſt. I heard of a little boy, to whom his mother conſtantly kept preaching damnation without end, for every ſin; one day, after ſhe had been diſcourſing with him in that manner, he went out to work, but ſoon returned back, ſuddenly opened the door, and with an air of ſurpriſe, cried out; "Why, mother, the law ſays, "*An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a* "*hand, a foot for a foot*; but you ſay, ten thouſand "for one, and that puniſhment ſhall never end." I have heard of numbers that had no better excuſe for ſinning greedily, than this, *viz.* that there was no hopes of their being ſaved; that, therefore, they were determined to ſin as much as poſſible, ſince

ſince it could make no difference. I have reaſon to ſay, from what I know of mankind, that more perſons refuſe to believe in Divine Revelation, becauſe it is commonly thought to contain the doctrine of *endleſs miſery*, than from any other cauſe: And numbers have embraced it immediately, upon being fairly convinced that it was not neceſſary to underſtand it in that light. And a very ſenſible Deiſt once ſaid to an acquaintance of mine, who believed and preached the univerſal doctrine; "Had I been acquainted with "your ſyſtem, thirty years ago, I ſhould have been "a zealous Chriſtian; and as great a friend to Re-"velation, as I have been an enemy." "And, "pray, why not now Doctor?"—"Becauſe I am "aſhamed, having ſo long been fighting againſt "it, to receive it now."

3. Though damnation has been commonly underſtood to be *endleſs*, for many ages; yet it has not (as far as we can judge) prevented evil at all, or very little: but I have mentioned before, how very ſtrict thoſe people live, who receive and hold the ſyſtem of limited puniſhments: whether it is, that *endleſs damnation* is too unnatural to be believed, and that *limited puniſhments*, being more reaſonable, ſeem more certain; or whether it be, that by conſidering they ſhall be puniſhed, either without end, or not at all; and every one thinking that endleſs puniſhment is more than they deſerve, but is only reſerved for ſome greater ſinners, and therefore they have nothing to fear from it, I ſhall not pretend to determine; but certain it is, that where the idea of endleſs miſery prevails, it has not prevented iniquity, in the meaſure that might have been expected, on the ſuppoſition of its being the truth of GOD.

4. The great number of Heathens, that die without ever being favoured with the light of the goſ-

pel, and certainly without ever hearing of endleſs miſery; the many that die in a ſtate of infancy and childhood; together with the inſtances of ideots, and perſons born deaf; all convince me, more than any logical arguments, that God has many ways of inſtructing and reclaiming his creatures, in another ſtate, that we are at preſent unacquainted with.

5. It is not ſo much the intention of God, merely to reſtrain ſin, as to ſhew it in all its dreadful deformity, puniſh it according to its deſerts, and, finally, to ſhew the ſuper-abounding of his grace, in overcoming and totally deſtroying it out of his creation; which ſhall be accompliſhed when He that ſitteth upon the throne ſhall make all things new; "And there ſhall be no more death, "neither ſorrow, nor crying; neither ſhall there "be any more pain; for the former things are "paſſed away," Rev. xxi. 4.

6. As the doctrine of the final Reſtoration, has been ſhewn in itſelf not to have the leaſt tendency to licentiouſneſs, but directly the reverſe; and, as far as I can learn, by hiſtory, or my own obſervation, thoſe who have believed it, in the manner here laid down, as perfectly conſiſtent with a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, have been particularly careful to depart from iniquity of every kind: yet if any ſhould be ſo loſt to all that is good, as to pervert this truth (revealed for contrary purpoſes) to their own deſtruction, they alone muſt bear the blame, the loſs, and the puniſhment. The Scriptures of truth have been perverted; yet, that is no argument againſt Divine Revelation: The Goſpel of the Grace of God, has been abuſed; but ſhould it never be preached on that account? Some, in the apoſtles days, turned the Grace of God itſelf into wantonneſs or laſciviouſneſs, (See Jude 4); and others pretended that

that thoſe holy men encouraged ſin, by proclaiming ſalvation to ſinners, through grace, or faith in Chriſt; of which St. Paul complains, (Rom. iii. 8.) "We be ſlanderouſly reported, and ſome "affirm that we ſay, Let us do evil, that good "may come: whoſe damnation is juſt."—The holy apoſtle abhorred, and conſtantly denied this horrid conſequence, which ſome perverſe minds pretended to draw from his doctrine; he declared that the damnation of ſuch was juſt, who did ſin that grace might abound, or who affirmed that the doctrine led thereto, or that the apoſtles taught or practiſed any ſuch things; nevertheleſs, (not as fools, but as wiſe) they did not think fit to lay the goſpel aſide, and refuſe to preach ſalvation through CHRIST any more on that account:—The ſelf-ſame reaſoning applies to the preſent caſe.

Friend. I muſt confeſs that you have ſo far prevailed as to ſilence this great objection; for certainly the belief of the Reſtoration ſeems by your account of it conſiſtent with a ſtate of grace, and the knowledge and practice of religion. But though you have obviated ſeveral objections, there is one you have not yet touched, which is very conſiderable, and I am doubtful that it will be difficult if not impoſſible for you to anſwer fairly, it may be thus expreſſed, *God has abounded towards us in all wiſdom:* one inſtance is his hanging out the threatenings of the ſevereſt puniſhments to prevent his creatures from ſinning while in this world; but to tell them at the ſame time, that if they ſhould ſin he means to ſave them, is not *prudent*; becauſe that leſſens, if not deſtroys the force of his threatening. He told Adam that if he did eat, he ſhould ſurely die; but did not tell him (at the ſame time) that if he ſhould eat, his caſe would not be remedileſs; this were to take down with one hand what he had ſet up with the other. After the threatening

failed of the effect, he told him ſo, and not before, this was prudently done; ſo after his threatenings fail of effect in this ſtate, is the time to reveal his deſign of ſaving daring ſinners. We may therefore be ſure that he has not done it yet, and that we miſcontrue thoſe texts which ſeem to contain ſuch a revelation. The next ſtate is the only ſtate to preach the doctrine, and reveal the doctrine. If you preach it here, it will be unneceſſary to preach it in hell; for obſtinate ſinners will carry it in their heads thither.

Miniſter. As ſpecious and plauſible as this objection ſeems, I doubt not of being able to anſwer it fairly, without evading the natural force of it in the leaſt. The firſt thing that I ſhall notice in this objection, is the very different and contrary manner in which you apply thoſe words of the apoſtle from his firſt evident intention. *He hath abounded towards us in all wiſdom and prudence, having made known unto us the myſtery of his will according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf, that in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one all things in Chriſt, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.* Epheſ. i. 8, 9, 10. God hath judged it be the height of heavenly wiſdom and prudence to make known to his ſaints, his glorious purpoſe, finally to rehead all things in Chriſt; and we ought not to preſume to be more wiſe and prudent than he. There is no doubt but God hath revealed this great truth more immediately to his ſaints and faithful ones for their conſolation, than for the benefit of the finally impenitent.

It is of amazing, I had almoſt ſaid of infinite uſe to the people of God, to have this divine counſel declared to them in the preſent time. The knowledge of this truth entirely removes all hard thoughts of God from the minds of thoſe who receive

ceive it, as I can teſtify by experience; for ſince I have believed in the doctrine of the univerſal Reſtoration, I have never had one hard thought of God abiding for one minute in my mind, that I remember, and never expect to have any more while I continue to believe it firmly.

The belief of the Reſtoration is of great uſe in ſupporting good people under their ſorrows and trials here; the idea that evil ſhall be deſtroyed, and all things reſtored to their primitive glory is the moſt conſolatory of all other ideas. As this doctrine tends to remove the greateſt difficulties from the plan of Providence, and alſo from divine Revelation, it is evident that the knowledge of it muſt be of the greateſt uſe to all that love their great Creator. And therefore if the revelation of it anſwered no other purpoſe in this life, but for the happineſs, joy, and ſatisfaction of ſuch as love God, we might be ſure that he hath made it known, and that we rightly underſtand thoſe paſſages that hold it forth; for ſince "the ſecret of the Lord is with "them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his "covenant," Pſal. xxv. 14. and "The Lord God "will do nothing, but he revealeth his ſecret "unto his ſervants the prophets," Amos, iii. 7. there is all the reaſon to conclude, that if God ever intended to reſtore mankind hereafter, he would not fail to reveal it to his choſen and faithful ſervants. And this he hath done, if I can underſtand the meaning of words.

It is true that God did not inform our firſt parents before they ſinned that he had provided a remedy; but not long did he delay after the fall to reveal to them, that the ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head; Gen. iii. 15. and this one text contains in miniature all that I believe reſpecting the Reſtoration of mankind; for if the Serpent's head is finally to be bruiſed, his power and

and influence over mankind, muſt be entirely deſtroyed; and then what ſhall prevent their return to God?

Beſides, it is impoſſible to read the Scriptures attentively, and not perceive that God very frequently mixes promiſes of mercies among his ſevereſt threatenings of judgment; and yet he doth not throw down with one hand, what he builds up with the other.

Your objection ſeems to ſuppoſe that the doctrine of the Reſtoration ſuperſedes and ſets aſide thoſe puniſhments which God has threatened to inflict upon the impenitent; or elſe how does the preaching of this doctrine weaken the force of the threatenings? But this is a very falſe idea; for we acknowledge that the threatenings ſhall be fulfilled, and not that the diſobedient ſhall eſcape unpuniſhed. There is a great deal of difference between theſe two ideas, though you would intimate them to be the ſame, and that we contradict God by aſſuring the wicked that they ſhall eſcape the juſt judgment of God. But we only declare that an end ſhall finally come to their puniſhment, and that when they ſhall be ſufficiently humbled a diſpenſation of mercy ſhall ſucceed that of judgment. Let me aſk you, Has not God threatened mankind with death on the account of ſin? "Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhall return." Gen. iii. 19. Well, tell me, is this threatening either weakened or deſtroyed by the knowledge of the great doctrine of the reſurrection of the dead? Did not God threaten the children of Iſrael with dreadful judgments to prevent their ſinning, and that they ſhould be diſperſed among all nations? but will you ſay that he either weakened or deſtroyed the force of his threatenings, becauſe he promiſed them at the ſame time that at laſt he would return their captivity, and reſtore them as at the firſt, and do better unto them, than at their beginning.

The

The laws of this country condemn criminals to death: would it be thought that I ſhould weaken or deſtroy the force of the penal ſtatutes, by ſaying, that the execution of the law could only be felt for a certain time, beyond which it could not endure? Is not every malefactor under the ſentence of death ſuppoſed to know this? and yet will any preſume to ſay, that theſe laws are entirely weakened, and their force deſtroyed becauſe they do not condemn tranſgreſſors to endleſs puniſhments? But, if it be allowed that torments, which are but momentary, have a conſiderable influence in reſtraining many vices, there cannot be the ſmalleſt reaſon to fear that the doctrine of juſt retribution according to the deeds done in the body, will open the door to vice and immorality, but on the contrary. But this objection is ſo near a kin to the laſt which you propoſed, that it hardly deſerves a diſtinct conſideration; for if the doctrine of the Reſtoration does not lead men to commit ſin, (as I am ſure it has no ſuch tendency) then no harm can be apprehended from its being known in this ſtate. And whereas you argue, that as it would not be proper for the preſent ſtate, we may be ſure that God hath not revealed it; I on the contrary think it is plainly revealed, and therefore is highly proper for men to know in the preſent ſtate. You will pleaſe therefore to notice that the univerſal doctrine, ſo far from tending to render the divine threatenings uſeleſs or vain, weakening their force, or ſetting them aſide, operates in the direct contrary manner. I as much believe as you or any other man can do, that all the threatenings will be fulfilled upon the finally impenitent; but dare not carry the matter ſo far as to ſet aſide the gracious promiſes of God, with which the Scriptures appear to me to abound, in favour of the final recovery of all at laſt.

Friend·

Friend. It muſt I think be confeſſed that if the doctrine of the Reſtoration be true, it would be matter of great joy and comfort for good men to know it, for they have often great trouble and anxiety of mind on the account of their families, friends, neighbours, acquaintance, and mankind in general; which ſorrow would be greatly relieved, could they have an idea of the Reſtoration of all things in the manner that you hold it. But however true this may be, it ſeems not to be plainly revealed in the Scripture, otherwiſe it would not be hiden from the eyes of ſo many great and good men.

Miniſter. It is poſſible, that a ſubject may be revealed in the plaineſt manner, and yet the beſt of men may remain ignorant of it. For inſtance, were not the ſufferings, death, and reſurrection of our Lord plainly revealed in the Scriptures of the old Teſtament? And yet we know that the apoſtles of our Saviour did not underſtand one of thoſe prophecies. Nay, when Jeſus told them openly and expreſſly that he muſt be delivered into the hands of men, and that they ſhould mock, ſcourge, and crucify him, and that the third day he ſhould riſe again, they did not comprehend his meaning; although he ſpoke to them frequently and very plainly upon the ſubject, and ſaid, "Let theſe "ſayings ſink down into your ears: for the Son "of man ſhall be delivered into the hands of men. "But they underſtood not this ſaying, and it was "hid from them, that they perceived it not; and "they feared to aſk him of that ſaying." St. Luke ix. 44, 45. And in another place we read, "For "he taught his diſciples, and ſaid unto them, "The Son of man is delivered into the hands of "men, and they ſhall kill him: and after that he "is killed, he ſhall riſe the third day." It is impoſſible that words ſhould be more expreſs, or leſs

leſs liable to be miſunderſtood. " But (as the evangeliſt immediately informs us) " they underſtood " not that ſaying, and were afraid to aſk him." St. Mark ix. 31, 32. And in the ſame chapter we find, that after our Lord Jeſus was transfigured upon the mount, in the preſence of Peter, James, and John, " As they came down from the moun- " tain, he charged them that they ſhould tell no " man what things they had ſeen, till the Son of " man were riſen from the dead. And they kept " that ſaying with themſelves, queſtioning one " with another what the riſing from the dead " ſhould mean." Ver. 9, 10. This was what Chriſt taught them not only plainly, but alſo frequently. See St. Matt. xvi. 21. xvii. 9, 22, 23. xx. 17, 18, 19. xxvi. 31, 32. St Mark viii. 31. ix. 9, 10, 31, 32. x. 32, 33, 34. xiv. 27, 28. St. Luke ix. 21, 22, 44, 45. xviii. 31, 32, 33, 34.

Yet notwithſtanding the plainneſs and frequency of theſe predictions, and the pains which Chriſt took to inſtil theſe ideas into them, they never underſtood them at all until ſometime after they were fulfilled. For when they ſaw him taken and delivered into the hands of men, and treated exactly according to his own words often repeated, they were entirely diſappointed, and all their hopes ſeemed to die within them. And when he was riſen from the dead, they would not believe the teſtimony of thoſe who had ſeen him, and would hardly truſt their own ſenſes, ſo ignorant were they of what he had told them.

St. John was the firſt of the diſciples who believed that he was riſen, for thus he writes " Then " went in alſo that other diſciple, who came firſt " to the ſepulchre, and he ſaw and believed. " For as yet they knew not the Scripture that he " muſt riſe again from the dead." St. John xx. 8, 9. This inſtance is much ſo to my purpoſe, and proves

ſo evidently that a thing may be plainly revealed, and expreſſed in the cleareſt manner, and yet not be underſtood; that I hardly need mention any more. But I will mention another, and that is, the calling of the Gentiles. This was ſpoken of by the prophets, in the cleareſt language; and Jeſus after his reſurection gave a full commiſſion to his apoſtles, which one would think it was impoſſible for them to miſunderſtand.

"All power is given unto me in heaven and "in earth, Go ye therefore and teach all nations," &c. St. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. "Go ye unto all "the world, and preach the goſpel to every crea- "ture." St. Mark xvi. 15.

"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt "to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead on the third "day: and that repentance and remiſſion of ſins "ſhould be preached among all nations, begin- "ing at Jeruſalem. And ye are witneſſes of theſe "things." St Luke xxiv. 46, 47, 48. "Ye ſhall "receive power after that the Holy Ghoſt is come "upon you: and ye ſhall be witneſſes unto me "both in Judea and in Samaria, and unto the ut- "termoſt part of the earth." Acts i. 8. But the apoſtles themſelves, even after the miraculous deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon them, were without underſtanding, reſpecting the calling of the Gentiles, until St. Peter was taught it by a viſion from heaven. See Acts x.

And St. Paul ſpeaks of this ſubject as a myſtery that was hid from ages and generations, and particularly revealed to him, and to the ſaints in that day. See Epheſ. iii. 1—11. Col. i. 25, 26, 27

Wherefore, when I conſider that the apoſtles themſelves could not for a time ſee thoſe things to be revealed, which yet were moſt plainly, fully, and frequently told them, I cannot wonder that many great and good men now ſhould not ſee the general

general Redemption and final Reſtoration of all things plainly revealed in the Scriptures, though to me ſcarce any ſubject appears more evident. It gives me now but little concern to hear many ſay, that they cannot ſee the matter plainly declared in the Bible, ſince I know that things have been there that wiſe and good men could not ſee; and what has happened in times paſt may take place now: and if I can ſee for myſelf, this great truth made known, it is enough for me. I am not to enquire, What does this man believe? Or What ſhall the other do? I muſt believe what the Scripture appears to me to teach, and do what I am there commanded, let others believe or do as they may.

Friend. But I have heard ſome ſay of you, "How comes this man to know more than all the "world? Have there not been many great, wiſe, "and good men in all ages, that have never "thought of theſe things? If this doctrine of "the final Reſtoration of all things had been true, "ſurely our wiſe, good, and learned miniſters "would have diſcovered it, and proclaimed it "long ago. But the doctrine of endleſs miſery "is a point in which they ſeem generally to agree, "however they differ in other matters, and there-"fore it muſt be true, and this doctrine of the "general Reſtoration, which this man holds up, "almoſt alone, muſt be falſe."

Miniſter. I am very far from pretending to be wiſer than any that have gone before me; and as for this doctrine of the Reſtoration it was not only believed and preached by the apoſtles, but many of the ancient fathers who lived in the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, were bold witneſſes for this glorious truth. It is true that when the Church of Rome roſe to ſupreme power, the Popes and Councils endeavoured to extirpate the *merciful doctors*

(as thoſe who believed the general Reſtoration, were called in deriſion) and their adherents, but it was not until near the cloſe of the ſeventh century, that they were able to ſilence the witneſſes for this truth. This, (as well as many other precious truths) then lay hid until the reformation, when it began a little to revive, and hath gradually increaſed ever ſince. Several great authors have written upon it; many hundreds, and even thouſands have believed it, and found comfort and joy therein. Nay, there are many miniſters who believe it now as firmly as I do, but do not chuſe to confeſs or preach it, for various reaſons; and great numbers of private chriſtians enjoy the comfort and happineſs of believing it ſecretly. But put the caſe that I ſtood alone in this teſtimony, yet if upon a fair examination, the Scriptures hold forth this idea, and if all objections againſt it may be fully anſwered; why ſhould my teſtimony be refuſed on the account of its ſingularity? God has an abſolute right to uſe what means or inſtruments he pleaſes, to manifeſt his truth, and to fulfil his purpoſes; and though I am nothing, and in his ſight am leſs than nothing, yet he is able by the things that are not, to confound and bring to nought the things that are, that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence. 1 Cor. i. 28, 29.

I acknowledge that the generality of miniſters in the preſent day profeſs to believe endleſs miſery, though they diſagree in other points; and indeed one reaſon why they fall out ſo much about other doctrines, is, becauſe they receive this as a firſt principle, as is very obvious; for were thoſe who believe that Chriſt died only for a part of mankind, once to give up the idea of endleſs miſery, they would acknowledge the univerſality of the love of God, and confeſs that Jeſus died for all in the fulleſt ſenſe. And on the other hand, if thoſe who believe

believe in general redemption, were not ſo exceedingly tenacious of the doctrine of endleſs miſery, they would not oppoſe the doctrine of election, nor hold that the will of God might be finally fruſtrated, and that the death of Chriſt ſhall be in vain, with reſpect to many, and that many objects of the divine love ſhall finally periſh to all eternity. Theſe inconſiſtencies in their ſentiments, and the conteſts between them and thoſe who hold partial redemption and ſalvation, are therefore chiefly, if not wholly owing to both parties being agreed in this moſt dreadful doctrine of endleſs miſery.

It is beautiful to obſerve the progreſſion of the glorious goſpel, from its opening to our firſt parents in the garden down to the preſent day. I have ſometimes mentioned, in public, that the more the goſpel is known and revealed, the larger and richer it appears.

It firſt ſeemed confined to one family or nation, but later diſcoveries ſhewed that all nations had a part therein, and all ſorts of people were deſigned to ſhare in its bleſſings: now the glorious news begins to be publiſhed abroad, not only that all nations, and all ſorts of people, but all perſons and individuals, without exception, not only *may* partake of its benefits, but *ſhall* in due time enjoy great advantages thereby.

God always adapts his remedies to the evils that prevail in the world; and therefore he hath opened his counſels to men according to their different capacities, needs, and circumſtances. Chriſtianity might, formerly, have been received and ſincerely practiſed, without being inveſtigated at all; but when infidelity riſes up and attacks it, as it does in this our age, it becomes the duty of its friends to defend it, by enquiring into its meaning; and laying all prejudices aſide, to receive as truth thoſe things

things which God hath revealed, and the ſame to vindicate before the world.

It might not formerly have been neceſſary to underſtand all the prophecies; and yet now, as the time of their fulfilment draws nigh, they may become more important, be more ſtudied, and better underſtood; and for this purpoſe, God may actually illuminate the minds of ſome, to ſet them forth in a more rational, ſcriptural, conſiſtent manner, than they have appeared in hitherto. And if it ſhould pleaſe God to make any uſe of my tongue or pen for this great purpoſe, the glory ſhall be all aſcribed to his name, to whom alone it is due; I ſhall have nothing to glory or boaſt of, foraſmuch as I can only communicate what I receive; and I hope none will refuſe to receive the truth, however weak or unworthy the inſtrument by which God may pleaſe to ſend it.

Friend. If this is the truth which you hold forth, however contrary to the commonly received opinions of the age, I ſee no reaſon why men ſhould refuſe to hear what you have to ſay; but I have heard many exclaim againſt you in the ſevereſt manner: and declare that they would not hear you, nor read your writings on any account: and others have ſaid, that they could confute and overthrow your whole ſyſtem in ten minutes, but whether they would be able to make their words good if they ſhould enter the liſts with you is another matter, and cannot be determined till a fair trial.

Miniſter. I can aſſure you my friend that I ſhould not have the leaſt objection to their making the attempt; for though I am conſcious that neither my natural nor acquired abilities, are worthy to be compared to thoſe of many excellent characters who hold the contrary ſentiments: yet the goodneſs of the cauſe in which I am engaged, inſpires me with courage to attempt its vindication, let who will enter the liſts with me. For when

when the evidence of this moſt glorious truth firſt began to appear to my mind, I was determined never to believe or profeſs it, until I could anſwer every objection that could be brought from the Scriptures againſt it, fairly, and without any torturing or twiſting the words of truth; and it pleaſed God ſo to open matters to my view, as to take every objection out of my mind, and to clear up every doubt, in ſuch a manner, that I have full ſatisfaction: And I can ſafely ſay, in the fear of God, that I am ſo far from being offended with thoſe who queſtion me upon the matter, and thereby give me an opportunity of anſwering for myſelf, that I take it as an act of kindneſs; and as I ſtand ready to be reproved wherein I am out of the way, ſo I ſhall thank the perſon who, in the ſpirit of love, convinces me of error: "Let the "righteous ſmite me; it ſhall be a kindneſs: and "let them reprove me; it ſhall be an excellent "oil, which ſhall not break my head." But let not the man who would write, dip his pen in gall; nor he that would converſe, make his tongue as a ſharp ſword: but "Let all bitterneſs, "and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-"ſpeaking, be put away from you, with all ma-"lice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-"hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, "for Chriſt's ſake, hath forgiven you. Put on, "therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, "bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of "mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering; forbearing one "another, and forgiving one another, if any man "have a quarrel againſt any; even as Chriſt for-"gave you, ſo alſo do ye. And, above all things, "put on charity, which is the bond of perfectneſs, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Theſe are the tempers of mind we ought always to poſſeſs; and eſpecially, when we diſcourſe upon [illegible] things of the kingdom of God.

Friend.

Friend. I have the ſame deſires that you expreſs; and I think it is to the ſhame of human nature, and a reproach to the innocent cauſe of Chriſtianity, that religious diſputes have been carried on with ſuch amazing bitterneſs and acrimony. Men ſeem frequently to forget that they are brethren; and that they muſt all ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. If they remembered theſe things, as they ought, they would not revile, cenſure, judge, and condemn each other, as they do: From which evil practices may the good Lord preſerve us, while we debate this very important ſubject; for though I am determined to urge every thing that I can with propriety, in the ſtrongeſt manner that I am able, yet I am willing to ſtipulate on my part, that if I ſhould uſe any reproachful or cenſorious language in the remainder of the debate, I will give you leave to conſider it as totally giving up the cauſe in which I am engaged.

Miniſter. And I hereby promiſe the ſame: for I am determined never to write a page of controverſy, unleſs it can be written in the very ſpirit of love and true benevolence, with a ſincere deſire to find and embrace the truth.

The want of this in moſt controverſial writers, has made ſerious people ſo weary of controverſy, that they will neither read nor hear it on any account: nor can I wonder at it, for ſuch bitterneſs tends entirely to root out the ſpirit of true religion.

Friend. I hope we ſhall ſhew an example to mankind, how diſputes ought to be carried on: in love, and in the fear of God, and for the purpoſe of mutual edification. But as our preſent diſcourſe has been long and very important, I will take my leave of you for this time, hoping at a future opportunity to have more converſation with you on this ſo intereſting a ſubject.

END OF THE THIRD DIALOGUE.

DIALOGUE IV.

Friend. I AM happy to have another opportunity of diſcourſing with you, concerning that point in which you differ from your brethren, the final Reſtoration of all things. I have thought much of the ſubject ſince I ſaw you; and though I muſt acknowledge, that you have anſwered, as far as I can ſee, ſome of the greateſt objections that I have found in the Scriptures; yet a conſiderable number remain to be anſwered, before I can venture to receive as a truth, what I have hitherto looked upon as a *dangerous hereſy*; and as I have many queſtions to propoſe, I wiſh to make the beſt uſe of my time.

Miniſter. Propoſe your objections, as freely as you pleaſe; and I will endeavour to anſwer them as briefly, and at the ſame time as plainly as poſſible.

Friend. CHRIST threatens the *Jews* with an eternal excluſion from his preſence: "Ye ſhall ſeek "me, and ſhall not find me; and where I am, thi-"ther ye cannot come," St. John, vii. 34. "Then ſaid JESUS again unto them, I go my way, "and ye ſhall ſeek me, and ſhall die in your ſins: "whither I go, ye cannot come. Ye are from be-"neath, I am from above: ye are of this world, "I am not of this world. I ſaid therefore unto "you, That ye ſhall die in your ſins: for if ye be-"lieve not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins," St. John, viii. 21, 23, 24.

Miniſter. Do you recollect that our LORD uſes

words nearly ſimilar to ſome of theſe, to his own diſciples?

Friend. No, indeed; I do not remember any ſuch like expreſſions uſed to them: Can you ſhew them to me?

Miniſter. If I do, will you acknowledge the force of the objection to be removed?

Friend. Certainly, I muſt.

Miniſter. Then read St. John, xiii. 33. "Little "children, yet a little while I am with you. "Ye ſhall ſeek me, and, as I ſaid unto the Jews, "Whither I go, ye cannot come; ſo now I ſay "unto you."

Friend. I am ſurprized that I ſhould never have obſerved this before—Let me read the paſſage—Oh! but ſtop—it is explained in the 36th verſe: "Simon Peter ſaid unto him, LORD, whither "goeſt thou? JESUS anſwered him, Whither I "go, thou canſt not follow me now; but thou "ſhalt follow me afterwards." But nothing of the kind is intimated reſpecting the *Jews*.

Miniſter. Not in that text, I confeſs; but in many others it is more than intimated, that they ſhall come to know and love him, yea, and to behold him as their friend. I think, it is intimated in thoſe words which our Saviour uſed, in the cloſe of his threatenings to Jeruſalem:— "Behold, your houſe is left unto you deſolate: and "verily I ſay unto you, Ye ſhall not ſee me hence"forth, until the time come when ye ſhall ſay, "Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the "LORD," St. Matth. xxiii. 38, 39. St. Luke, xiii. 35. It is more than intimated in theſe words—"And ſo *all Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved. For "GOD hath concluded them all in unbelief, that "he might have mercy upon all," Rom. xi. 26, 32. "In JEHOVAH ſhall *all* the ſeed of *Iſrael* be "juſtified, and ſhall glory," Iſai. xlv. 25. "I will

" will call them My people, who were not my " people; and her Beloved, that was not beloved. " And it ſhall come to paſs, that in the place " where it was ſaid unto them, Ye are not my peo- " ple, there ſhall they be called, The children of " the living God," Rom. ix. 25, 26. " Now will " I bring again the captivity of *Jacob*, and have " mercy upon the *whole* houſe of *Iſrael:* I have " gathered them unto their own land, and have " left none of them," Ezek. xxxix. 25, 28. " And I will multiply men upon you, (the moun- " tains of Iſrael) *all* the Houſe of *Iſrael*, even *all* " of it," xxxvi. 10. " Behold, O my people, I " will open your graves, and cauſe you to come " up out of your graves, and bring you into the " land of Iſrael. And ye ſhall know that I am " JEHOVAH, when I have opened your graves, O " my people, and brought you up out of your graves, " and ſhall put my Spirit in you, and ye ſhall live, " and I ſhall place you in your own land: then " ſhall ye know that I, JEHOVAH, have ſpoken " it, and performed it, ſaith JEHOVAH," chap. xxxvii. 12, 13, 14.

Friend. But this returning from captivity, can only reſpect ſuch as are alive at that period, when the LORD ſhall ſet his hand the ſecond time to re- cover the remnant of his people from Aſſyria, &c.

Miniſter. That is more than any one can prove: as the expreſſion is ſometimes uſed evidently for the Reſtoration of ſuch whoſe bodies are deſtroyed, beyond diſpute; as, in the caſe of *Sodom* and her daughters, who were taken away, by fire and brimſtone from heaven, whoſe captivity GOD promiſes to return, together with the captivity of *Samaria*, and her daughters, at the ſame time that he will bring again the captivity of *Jeruſalem*, and her daughters, in the midſt of them. See Ezek. xvi. 44———63; eſpecially, verſes 53, 55, 61.

Friend. But Mr. POOLE's Continuators, as well

as many other eminent divines, tell us, that these which you take to be promises, are only dreadful threatenings; and their meaning is this:—I never will bring again the captivity of *Samaria*, and her daughters; nor the captivity of *Sodom*, and her daughters; neither will I ever bring again the captivity of *thy captives*, in the midst of them: when *Sodom* and her daughters shall return to their former estate, (which is impossible) and *Samaria* and her daughters shall return to their former estate, (which shall never be) then *thou* and thy daughters shall return to your former estate: but that time shall never come.

Minister. I know, such is their interpretation, which proves nothing more than the weakness of their cause; for in all this, they expressly contradict GOD, who, from the 60th verse to the end of the chapter, promises blessings to Jerusalem in the most absolute manner; That he will remember the covenant made with her in the days of her youth, and will establish unto her an everlasting covenant; that she shall receive her sisters, *Samaria* and *Sodom*, (called her *elder* and her *younger* sisters); and he promises to give them to her, for daughters; not by the first covenant, indeed, but by the new and everlasting covenant, which he will make in those days; then shall the covenant be firmly established with her; she shall know JEHOVAH; shall remember, and be confounded; and never shall open her mouth in pride any more, because of her former sin and shame, when GOD shall be pacified toward her, for all that she hath done.

How many promises has GOD made to *Jerusalem*, in the prophecies, of not only bringing her *captivity*, and returning her to her *former estate*; but even causing greater blessings than ever to come to her, and of doing *better* to her than in her *beginning*, making her an *eternal excellency*, a *joy* of *many generations*, &c.

It

It is therefore very ſurpriſing, that men profeſſing to believe the Bible, ſhould dare be ſo bold as to deny theſe promiſes, and declare, that GOD will never bring *Jeruſalem* to her former eſtate! They might, indeed, ſafely ſay, that the promiſes have not yet been fulfilled; but it is too bold to aſſert, That therefore they will never be accompliſhed. Were there no other text to prove the Reſtoration of the Jews who died in their ſins, and indeed of the whole fallen race of Adam, I ſhould judge this ſufficient;—" *All* that the *Father* " *giveth me, ſhall come to me*; and him that cometh " unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out. For I came " down from heaven, not to do my own will, but " the will of him that ſent me. And this is the " *Father's* will, which hath ſent me, that of *all* " which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe *nothing*; " but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day," " St. John, vi. 37, 38, 39. Here we find that *Chriſt*, our *Lord*, declares, not only that *all* that the *Father giveth* him *ſhall come* to him; but alſo, that they ſhall come in ſuch a manner, as in no wiſe to be *caſt out*; and that ſuch is the *Father's* will, that nothing of all which he hath given to the *Son*, ſhould be loſt, or miſſing, at that great day when he ſhall deliver up the kingdom to the *Father*, who did put all things under him; and as this is the will of that *God who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will*; and as *Chriſt* has undertaken the accompliſhment of this will of the *Father*, it concludes abſolutely and forcibly againſt the doctrine of *endleſs miſery*, and *annihilation*.

Friend. It certainly does, with reſpect to all thoſe whom the *Father giveth*, or hath given, to the *Son*; but to none elſe.

Miniſter. That is all that I contend for: I ground the univerſal Reſtoration of all things, upon theſe two premiſes, which I call the *major* and the *minor*,

1. That

1. That *all things* are given to the *Son*, without exception: 2. That *all* that are *given him, ſhall come to him*, in ſuch a manner as *not to be caſt out*; and that none ſhall be miſſing, loſt, or wholly deſtroyed, but ſhall be forth-coming, in that great day when *Chriſt* ſhall give up the kingdom to the *Father*.

Friend. But can you prove your *major*? I am ſenſible that the *minor* has been the great foundation upon which *particular redemption*, &c. has been ſupported; but if the *major* can be proved, it will ſet the ſtrongeſt weapons of thoſe who hold *partial decrees*, &c. directly againſt them, and will give another turn to the argument.

Miniſter. I can prove the *major* by the ſame poſitive expreſſions as the *minor*, and by more paſſages of Scripture; and you ſhall judge for yourſelf, whether I quote them fairly, and whether they can be invalidated by any arguments which will not, at the ſame time, invalidate the *minor*. I will ſet down the ſeveral texts at large, as they are of great importance.

St. Matth. xi. 27. "*All things* are delivered unto "me of my *Father:* and no man knoweth the *Son* "but the *Father:* neither knoweth any man the "*Father*, ſave the *Son*, and he to whomſoever the "*Son* will reveal him." The very ſame words are mentioned by St. Luke: See chap. x. 22.

But the moſt ſtriking paſſages of this kind, are found in the goſpel of St. John, chap. iii. 35. and xiii. 3. "The *Father* loveth the *Son*, and hath "given *all things* into his hands. *Jeſus* knowing "that the *Father* had given *all things* into his "hands, and that he was come from *God*, and "went to *God*, &c."

God hath moreover ſaid to his *Son*, "Aſk of "me, and I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine "inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth "for thy poſſeſſion," Pſal. ii. 8.

Thus

Thus, *all things* are given to *Chriſt*, without exception. The *major* and *minor* being both proved from Scripture, we may venture to draw this concluſion:

If *all things* are given into the hands of *Chriſt*, by the *Father*; and all that the *Father* giveth, or hath given, ſhall come to *Chriſt*, in ſuch a manner as not to be caſt out; then ſhall all men be reſtored.

Here the whole Chriſtian world may unite, without either party being obliged to give up their favourite tenets: and while ſome ſtrongly contend, and prove from Scripture, that *all things* are delivered into the hands of *Jeſus*; let the others go on to prove, that *all* that the *Father* giveth, ſhall come in ſuch a manner as not to be caſt out: Thus ſhall the truth be promoted mutually and equally, by thoſe who ſeem to contradict each other; but neither ſhall, in that caſe, contradict what our Lord hath ſaid.

But as *all things*, or *all men*, without exception, are given to *Jeſus*, that he might reſtore, or bring them back to God, in his own way and time; ſo is he inveſted with *all power*, that he might be able to accompliſh ſo great a work. *Jeſus* ſpake, ſaying, "*All power* is given unto me, in Heaven and in "earth," St. Matth. xxviii. 18. "For as the *Father* "hath life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the *Son* "to have life in himſelf; and hath given him au- "thority to execute judgment alſo, becauſe he is "the Son of man," St. John, v. 26, 27. *Jeſus*, our *Lord*, has power to quicken ſouls who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; See Epheſ. ii. 1. He himſelf ſaith; "Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, The "hour is coming, and now is, when the dead "ſhall hear the voice of the *Son* of *God*; and they "that hear, ſhall live," St. John, v. 25. He hath power to raiſe all the dead that are in their graves; for he ſaith, "Marvel not at this: for the "hour

" hour is coming, in which all that are in the " graves ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come " forth: they that have done good, to the reſur- " rection of life; and they that have done evil, " to the reſurrection of damnation," verſe 29. But he has not only power to raiſe the dead, and quicken whom he will; to give rewards to them that love him, and to paſs ſentence of judgment and condemnation upon his foes, and they that have done evil; but has alſo power to *ſubdue all things* unto himſelf, to *reconcile all things*, and to *re-head all things* in himſelf: And whatever methods he may uſe towards mankind, and whatever miſeries he may ſuffer them to feel for their ſins, and how long ſoever the dreadful age of judgement and fiery indignation may laſt, *Chriſt* has given us to underſtand, in his prayer to the *Father*, that the power which he hath, was given with a deſign far ſuperior to this, (though judgment is included)—he ſaith, (in that addreſs which, for its grandeur, beauty, ſimplicity, and majeſty, never was equalled); " As thou haſt given him power " over *all fleſh*, that he ſhould give eternal life to " as many (*pan*, ALL) as thou haſt given him. " And this is life eternal, that they might know " thee, the only true *God*, and *Jeſus Chriſt* whom " thou haſt ſent," St. John, xvii. 2, 3. Here we ſee, that his power over all fleſh was given him for this grand purpoſe, that ultimately he might give eternal life; not only endleſs exiſtence, but the knowledge of *God* and his *Chriſt*, to *all* that the *Father* hath given him; which are all without exception.—This is the will of *God*, that of *all* which he hath given the *Son*, he ſhould loſe nothing; but ſhould give eternal life, even the knowledge of *God*, which he alone can give, to all, without reſerve, whom the *Father* hath given him; this is the will which *Chriſt* came to do, and this he hath

power

power to perform.—Now, if he came purpoſely to do the will of *God*; and if it is the will of *God*, that of all that the *Father* hath given to the *Son*, he ſhould loſe nothing; but ſhould bring all to himſelf, in ſuch a manner as that they ſhould not be caſt out, and give them all eternal life; and if all, without reſerve, are given to him, and univerſal power and dominion are his, for this very purpoſe; if all theſe premiſes are true—as who can deny?—then nothing can be more evident than this concluſion, *viz.* that *All ſhall be at laſt reſtored.*

"It is written in the prophets, (ſaith Jeſus)—"And they ſhall be all taught of *God*. Every "man therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned "of the *Father*, cometh unto me," St. John, vi. 45.—If *all* ſhall be taught of *God*; and *all* that are taught, ſhall come to *Chriſt*; and none that come to him ſhall be caſt out or rejected; if all theſe premiſes are true (and, I think, they are fully proved); how very naturally the concluſion follows, *viz.* that all ſhall be finally brought home to *God*, before *Chriſt* ſhall reſign the kingdom to the *Father*.

Our bleſſed Lord is inveſted with power ſufficient to perform this work: It is the will of *God* that it ſhould be done; *Chriſt* came into the world on purpoſe to begin, and lay a foundation for the ſame; he hath laid a ſufficient foundation, by taſting death for *all*; one died for *all*; he gave himſelf a ranſom for *all*, to be teſtified in due time; and he ſeemed confident that he ſhould be able to accompliſh this *will* of the *Father*, when he ſaid, "And "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all* "unto me," St. John, xii. 32. He *was* lifted up from the earth, and therefore the IF is now no more; he will certainly draw all unto himſelf, and give eternal life, or the knowledge of *God* to all. *He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied:*

And who can conceive how much it will take to ſatisfy the capacious ſoul of the *Son of God*, and eſpecially after having borne ſuch deadly pains for *all?* Theſe paſſages, my friend, eſtabliſh my mind in the belief of the final univerſal Reſtitution, beyond all heſitation; nevertheleſs, I would not wiſh to force your aſſent, were it in my power, but only to lay before you that evidence which has wrought upon me, and has brought me over, notwithſtanding my education, prejudices, former ſentiments, cuſtom, the multitude, my intereſt, my honour, and connections, were all againſt it.

Friend. I ſuppoſe you know the expoſitions that are given by the generality of expoſitors upon all theſe texts; and it is a fact that thouſands and millions of great and good men have read them, many have preached from them, and yet never ſaw any thing like the univerſal Reſtoration contained in them; but if the doctrine be true, and be at all intended to be ſet forth in the Scriptures, I muſt ſuppoſe that the paſſages you have mentioned, may allude to it; but I have many objections yet to propoſe, which muſt be fairly anſwered before I can receive it.

Miniſter. I would chooſe you ſhould propoſe every objection that you can, eſpecially thoſe that may be brought from the ſacred page; not only for your own ſatisfaction, but leſt any ſhould be led to ſuppoſe that objections of the greateſt force are purpoſely kept back, becauſe no ſolid anſwers could be found; whereas I am deſirous of hearing whatever can be fairly urged from the Scriptures againſt this view, and make no doubt of being able to ſhew, that all may be fully anſwered.

Friend. What do you think of thoſe paſſages, where GOD is repreſented as ſwearing in his wrath that unbelievers ſhall not enter into his reſt, which are found in Pſal. xcv. 11. Heb. iii. 11, 18, 19.

Chap.

Chap. iv. 3, 6, compared with Numb. xiv. Do they not ſeem to cut off all hopes of the reſtoration of thoſe who die in their ſins?

Miniſter. By the *reſt* that was promiſed to the children of Iſrael, which they forfeited by their unbelief, we muſt underſtand the land of *Canaan*, and not the final ſtate of happineſs. For who can ſuppoſe, that out of more than ſix hundred thouſand men, beſides women, only two will be ſaved?—and that even *Moſes* and *Aaron*, thoſe ſaints of the Lord, will be loſt among the reſt? For they, as well as others, entered not in; becauſe they believed not God, to ſanctify him before the congregation: (See Numb. xx. 12.) Only *Caleb* and *Joſhua* entered into that *reſt*, for they followed the *Lord* fully: and they are typical of thoſe who ſhall follow the Lamb in all ages, ſo as to obtain a part in the *firſt reſurrection*, over whom the ſecond death ſhall have no power: they who are *called*, and *choſen*, and *faithful*, and are *overcomers*, ſhall reign with *Chriſt* on earth during the *Milleniun*, which is the *reſt* that was pointed out by the land of *Canaan*.

Friend. Is it, indeed? We have commonly underſtoood that *reſt* which the children of Iſrael had in the promiſed land, as typical of Heaven and eternal felicity.

Miniſter. This cannot be; ſince it is evident that mighty wars were waged, and dreadful battles fought, thirty-one kings and kingdoms were conquered and ſubdued by Joſhua and the Iſraelites, after they paſſed over Jordan; it was not a perfect *reſt*, but only a type of that keeping of the ſabbath which remains for the people of GOD, into which we are exhorted to enter; which is the time when our *Lord*, after having conquered the nations of the earth, ſhall reign for a *thouſand years*, before the ſecond reſurrection; but as many of the Iſraelites may be ſaved in the day of the Lord, whoſe car-

caſes fell in the wilderneſs; ſo, likewiſe, ſhall the names of many be found in the book of life, at the general judgment, when the dead, ſmall and great, ſhall ſtand before GOD, who were not worthy to have a part in the firſt reſurrection. Theſe paſſages, therefore, conclude ſtrongly againſt *thoſe* having a part in the firſt reſurrection; but nothing againſt the final Reſtoration, which is a ſtate far beyond, and belongs to another diſpenſation.

Friend. This is quite a different comment from what I have ever heard before; but allowing this objection to be anſwered, I have another in my mind, that appears very difficult, and I ſhould be glad to know what you can ſay upon it; it is drawn from Iſaiah, xxvii. 11. "For it is a people of no "underſtanding; therefore he that made them "will not have mercy on them, and he that form-"ed them will ſhew them no favour." How can they ever be reſtored, if GOD will not have mercy upon them, nor ſhew them any favour?

Miniſter. If we did not underſtand theſe words with ſome limitation, it would be as difficult to reconcile them with other paſſages of Scripture, as with the doctrine of the Reſtoration; but if we only limit the time, all is eaſy; "He ſhall have "judgment without mercy, that hath ſhewed no "mercy;" nevertheleſs it is added, "but mercy "rejoiceth againſt judgment," James ii. 13. The way I anſwer all theſe threatenings, and ſhew them to be conſiſtent with that boundleſs mercy of GOD, that is over all his works, is, to ſhew, that both wrath and mercy have their ſeaſon; that *anger endureth* but a *moment*, but that *mercy endureth for ever*; which glorious declaration is expreſſed more than forty times in the Scripture; and that God frequently threatens the greateſt judgments, and promiſeth the greateſt mercies, to the ſame people and perſons. "Thus ſaith JEHOVAH, Thy bruiſe

"is

" is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. There " is none to plead thy cauſe, thatthou mayeſt be " bound up: thou haſt no healing medicines. " All thine lovers have forgotten thee: they ſeek " thee not; for I have wounded thee with the " wound of an enemy, with the chaſtiſement of a " cruel one, for the multitude of thy iniquity; " becauſe thy ſins were increaſed. Why crieſt " thou for thine affliction? thy ſorrow is incur- " able, for the multitude of thine iniquity: be- " cauſe thy ſins were increaſed, I have done theſe " things unto thee." Now, who would not think, from reading theſe words, that theſe people were in a moſt hopeleſs ſtate, beyond the reach of mercy; and that it was in vain for them even to ſeek it? —And yet the very next words ſpeak a language directly contrary. " Therefore all they that de- " vour thee, ſhall be devoured, &c. For I will " reſtore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of " thy wounds, ſaith JEHOVAH; becauſe they called " thee an Outcaſt, ſaying, This is *Zion*, whom no " man ſeeketh after." See Jer. xxx. 12—17. I could juſtify this obſervation by hundreds of paſ- ſages wherein GOD threatens his people with judg- ments the moſt ſevere, and declares—that his eye ſhall not pity, nor his arm ſave; that he will viſit their tranſgreſſions upon them, will utterly caſt them off, and will not have compaſſion upon them at all; and then ſuch promiſes of mercy break out as are ſufficient to aſtoniſh every one with their greatneſs. But time would fail to quote them at large. GOD, by Hoſea, ſays, " I will no more " have mercy upon the houſe of Iſrael; but I will " utterly take them away. For ye are not my " people, and I will not be your God." And then immediately ſays, ſpeaking of a time to come, " And it ſhall come to paſs, that in the place where " it was ſaid unto them, Ye are not my people, " there

there it ſhall be ſaid unto them, " Ye are the ſons " of the living God." See Hoſea, i. 6, 9, 10.

The whole prophecy, indeed, ſeems of a piece with this ſpecimen. In the ſecond chapter it is ſaid, " Plead with your mother, plead: for ſhe is " not my wife, neither am I her huſband; and I " will not have mercy upon her children; for " they be the children of whoredoms." Then he goes on to pronounce many dreadful threatenings; but the chapter cloſes with the moſt amazing promiſes of mercies to the ſame people, under the ſimilitude of a wife that had been rejected, and after a long time received again. " And I " will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I " will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and " in judgment, and in loving-kindneſs, and in " mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in " faithfulneſs, and thou ſhalt know the *Lord*. " And I will ſow her unto me in the earth, and I " will have mercy upon her that had not obtained " mercy; and I will ſay to them who were not " my people, Thou art my people; and they " ſhall ſay, Thou art my GOD;" See Hoſ. ii. 2, 4, 19, 20, 23. Thus the objection admits of a fair and rational anſwer; and I have been the larger upon it, becauſe I judged it of great importance to clear it up thoroughly: but more paſſages upon this ſubject are needleſs, or I could eaſily produce great numbers, that ſpeak to the ſame purpoſe.

Friend. You have ſeemed to come over this objection rather better than I could have expected, but I muſt beg leave to aſk you, What you do with that paſſage: (Pſalm xlix. 19.) " He ſhall " go to the generation of his fathers; they ſhall " never ſee light?"

Miniſter. I render the words *gnad natzah*, 'until ſubdued and overcome, they ſhall not ſee the light;' *or*, 'until the age, or a certain period, they ſhall

ſhall not ſee the light.' The ſame words are uſed in Job. xxxiv. 36, where they are rendered "*unto* "*the end.*" "My deſire is, that Job may be "tried unto the end." How would it ſeem, to render the words thus—"My deſire is, that Job "may be tried *never*; *or*, may *never* be tried?" This would be quite inconſiſtent with the nature of things, as well as a contradiction in the words themſelves; For firſt to ſay, "My deſire is, that Job may be tried," and then to add words that mean *never*, is quite ridiculous even to ſuppoſe; but render the words, '*unto a time* or *period*,' or, as they will bear, '*until he be ſubdued* or *overcome*,' and the meaning is both plain and benevolent: but to wiſh him tried *for ever*, world without end, would be a moſt malevolent wiſh,—and to wiſh him tried *never*, would be nonſenſe.

Friend. This tranſlation is very different from that which we commonly read, in which this text appears a very formidable objection indeed: for if they ſhall never ſee the light, they cannot be reſtored.

Miniſter. The word *never* is ſometimes uſed in our tranſlation, in ſuch a manner as to oblige us to underſtand it in a limited ſenſe, as has been proved before: Lev. vi. 13. "The fire ſhall ever "be burning upon the altar, it ſhall *never* go "out; and in ſeveral other places.

Friend. I muſt allow that the words you mention ſeem very ſtrong and abſolute, but the very reaſon of things obliges us to limit their meaning to a period or age; but where no ſuch neceſſity appears we muſt underſtand ſuch words in the moſt abſolute and unlimited ſenſe.

Miniſter. I think there is as abundant reaſon from Scripture to limit the time of puniſhment as any thing whatever; as I truſt will appear in the courſe of our converſation, for which purpoſe I ſhall

ſhall be glad to hear all that you are able to urge againſt the doctrine of the Reſtoration.

Friend. The next objection I ſhall bring is from Job, xxxvi. 18. "Becauſe there is wrath, beware "leſt he take thee away with his ſtroke; then a "great ranſom cannot deliver thee." By which we underſtand, that after death there is no deliverance, no, not even by that *great ranſom*, the blood of *Chriſt*.

Miniſter. This would be one of the ſtrongeſt objections that you have yet advanced, if the words *a great ranſom*, had any alluſion to the blood of the dear *Redeemer*, and if it could be fairly demonſtrated, that it can have no power over the dead; but I apprehend, when you read and conſider the text, context, and ſimilar paſſages, you will ſee that no ſuch thing is intended.

Job had frequently wiſhed for death in his trouble and anguiſh, (as many perſons fooliſhly and wickedly do, that have never felt the tenth part of his afflictions) for which *Elihu* juſtly reproves him, in theſe words: "Becauſe there is wrath, be-"ware leſt he take thee away with his ſtroke; then "a great ranſom cannot deliver thee," from death and the grave; from being cut off by the hand of Heaven, juſtly provoked by thy raſhneſs: "Will he eſteem thy riches?" Will he account thy great riches a ranſom for thy life? "No not gold, "nor all the forces of ſtrength:" Wouldeſt thou give ever ſo much of the precious ore to ranſom thy life, it would be unavailable; or, ſhouldeſt thou truſt in thy ſtrength of body or mind; ſhouldeſt thou plead the readineſs of thy wit, the ſtrength and greatneſs of thy judgment, memory, and other faculties; thy benevolence of diſpoſition, thy uſefulneſs in life, thy numerous connections, the great honours that await thee; were thou a monarch, and couldeſt thou command armies, and

valiant

valiant hoſts, ſtrong and mighty; all theſe things would be totally diſregarded by God, if he, provoked by thy raſhneſs, ſhould give thee thy wiſh, and iſſue the *death warrant* againſt thy life: therefore, conſidering theſe things, "Deſire not the "night (of death, and eſpecially ſudden death) "when people are cut off in their place;" and there is no remedy, no ranſom, no diſcharge in that war; from which neither power, wiſdom, might, riches, honours, wickedneſs, nor even virtue, can deliver. "Take heed, regard not "iniquity;" do not ſin in any wiſe, and eſpecially do not raſhly wiſh for death; which is very preſumptuous and heaven daring; "for this thou "haſt choſen, rather than affliction:" See Job, xxxvi. 18, 19, 20, 21. This is evidently the plain meaning of the text, and is confirmed by Pſal. xlix. 6, 7, 8, 9. "They that truſt in "their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the mul-"titude of their riches; none of them can by any "means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ran-"ſom for him: (For the redemption of their ſoul, is "precious, and it ceaſeth for ever). That he "ſhould ſtill live for ever, and not ſee corruption." But, though the power of wealth, wiſdom, and ſtrength, are not ſufficient to buy a ſhort reprieve from death; yet the power of GOD is able to ranſom therefrom, and to redeem from the grave, or hell, as I have noticed before; and which is expreſſed in the laſt-mentioned Pſalm, in the following terms; "But GOD will redeem my ſoul "from the power of the grave; for he ſhall re-"ceive me," ver. 15. And by the ſame parity "of reaſoning, that the power of the HIGHEST is able alſo to redeem or ranſom, the bodies of men from the grave, after they have periſhed there: he is able alſo to redeem ſouls from ſin and miſery, if it be his pleaſure; and, by the blood of the

MESSIAH's covenant, to ſend forth his priſoners out of the pit wherein is no water, not even a drop to cool the tongues of thoſe who are tormented there. I have therefore no doubt, but, the blood of *Chriſt* is able to redeem to the uttermoſt, and is ſufficient to deſtroy the power of ſin, death, and hell. Nothing in the text on which your objection is founded, can depreciate the merit of that cleanſing, all-powerful blood, by proving that it cannot be effectual to loſt ſouls.

Friend. But have you forget that the Scripture ſays, "Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it "with thy might; for there is no work, nor de- "vice, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom, in the grave, "whither thou goeſt. And if the tree fall to- "ward the ſouth, or toward the north; in the "place where the tree falleth, there it ſhall be?" Eccleſ. ix. 10. xi. 3.

Miniſter. No; I have not forgot that ſuch paſſages are found in the Bible; and I believe they were written with a deſign to make us diligent, and wiſely to improve our time and talents; and that we ſhould be liberal in giving alms, which ſeems eſpecially to be the meaning of the laſt, if we may judge by the connexion in which it is found, and without which I am not able to ſay what it intends: But, in this caſe, they do not appear to me to be any thing to the purpoſe, one way or the other; and yet no Scriptures are more frequently brought than theſe againſt the doctrine of the Reſtoration of all things; but commonly accompanied with ſome additions; ſuch as—"There is no repent- "ance in the grave; Nor pardon offered to the "dead."—"And as death leaves us, ſo judgment "finds us."—Words that I have never found in the Bible; but were they repeated ever ſo often, could not affect this argument; ſince the general Reſtoration cannot happen till long after the laſt Judgment, and will not be wholly compleated till the

the time of the creation of the new heavens and earth, wherein righteouſneſs alone ſhall dwell.

We all know, that the grave is a place of inactivity, where there is no *work, device, knowledge*, nor *wiſdom*; and it is a ſtate to which we ſhall ſoon be brought; and, therefore, we ought to be diligent and induſtrious now: But thoſe who believe in the immortality of the *ſoul*, will not undertake to prove from theſe words, that it has no *knowledge*, or *wiſdom*, after it leaves the body; ſince many of them ſay, that the ſoul knows much more in one hour after that event takes place, than in the whole period of its exiſtence before. And as for thoſe who believe that man dies *wholly*, and ſleeps in the grave until the reſurrection, they can never bring this text with any conſiſtency againſt the final Reſtoration of all men; becauſe, let what will be the ſtate of things in the grave, nothing can prevent our Saviour from raiſing all at laſt, and changing them finally for the better, if ſuch be his pleaſure. I might, therefore, juſt as well attempt, from the vii. and xiv. chapters of Job, to prove, that there ſhall be *no reſurrection of the dead from their graves*, notwithſtanding the numerous promiſes of that grand event; as any perſon to prove, from theſe and ſimilar paſſages, that *all men ſhall not be finally reſtored*; ſince what is ſaid in thoſe chapters ſeems ten times more againſt the *former*, than any thing that can be urged from theſe is againſt the *latter*. The doctrine of the general *reſurrection* of the juſt and unjuſt; and a ſtate of *rewards* for the former, and *puniſhments* for the latter, according to their works; and alſo the *ſubjection*, *final reconciliation*, and *re-union of* ALL *things in* CHRIST, are all expreſſly revealed, and are made the ſubject of prophecies, threatenings, and promiſes; and are all truths, that cannot be over-

thrown by any reaſonings, as they are plainly declared by GOD himſelf.

The Scripture, in abundance of places, highly recommends liberality; and, in the moſt poſitive manner, aſſures the bounteous, that they ſhall be bleſſed: I need not recite paſſages to prove, what is ſo univerſally known and confeſſed. *Solomon*, therefore, having given many excellent precepts to direct us in other matters, comes to exhort us to be bountiful and liberal, in diſtributing to the neceſſities of others what GOD hath bleſſed us withal; ſaying, "Caſt thy bread upon the waters; for "thou ſhalt find it after many days. Give a por- "tion to ſeven, and alſo to eight; for thou know- "eſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth. If "the clouds be full of rain, they empty them- "ſelves upon the earth: and if the tree fall to- "ward the ſouth, or toward the north; in the "place where the tree falleth, there it ſhall be." Thereby intimating to us, that as certainly as theſe plain common obſervations are true, (than which nothing can be more ſo) ſhall they who beſtow liberally upon the poor and needy, be rewarded; ſince GOD has promiſed, and he will perform: See, upon this ſubject, Deut. xv. 10, 11.—Pſal. xli. 1, 2, 3. cxii.—Prov. xi. 24, 25, 26. xiv. 31. xix. 17. xxii. 9.—St. Matth. vi. 3, 4, x. 42.—St. Luke, vi. 38. xii. 33. xiv. 12, 13, 14.—2 Cor. viii. 9.—1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19—and many other places.

Solomon then goes on upon the ſame ſubject, and intimates to us, by two ſtriking metaphors, that if we wait till no difficulties appear in our way to hinder us from performing our duty, we ſhall never reap the bleſſing; and after giving us to underſtand, that GOD has many ſecret ways of working, far above our comprehenſion, and can therefore bleſs and reward us in many ways out of our

own

own ſight, or the view of others, and yet no leſs certainly than children are conceived, nouriſhed, and receive life in the womb, though we know not how; he comes to give us a warm and preſſing exhortation, to be conſtant in doing good to all, according to our power; and to be ſo far from concluding that to be loſt that we thus beſtow, that we ought to conſider alms as ſeed ſown in a fruitful ſoil, and ſhould, with patience, wait for the glorious harveſt, when, through the divine bleſſing, we may expect to reap an hundred fold.

All this is plain and eaſy: But how any text in this beautiful chain, ſhould ever have been thought to have any alluſion to the ſtate of ſouls departed, or brought as a proof that no alteration can take place after death, I cannot conceive. But, allowing it to have any relation at all to a future ſtate, it cannot then in the leaſt diſprove, that very material changes may happen to ſouls in the ſpiritual world; ſince a tree cut down by its owner, lies not long in the ſame poſition in which it falls, but is applied to various uſes, according to its fitneſs and his pleaſure. But as this is nothing to the purpoſe, I think I have taken too much pains here already; and I ſhould have ſaid little or nothing upon this part of the objection, were it not continually urged, as though the whole controverſy turned and terminated upon this alluſion, than which, nothing ſeems farther from the meaning of the text; which, in its true ſenſe, appears to be this—That as certainly as full clouds muſt empty themſelves upon the terraqueous globe, and that every thing is *what it is*, and *where it is*, and no where elſe; and as a tree falling to the ſouth, does not fall and lie to the north; and, *vice-verſa*, ſo, with the ſame certainty, ſhall liberality be bleſt and rewarded.

Friend.

Friend. I have nothing to object to what you have said upon the text; it appears natural. I formerly thought it intended, that as persons were laid in the grave, so they should rise, and that there could be no change after death; but I am fully convinced, that this belongs not to the subject. But there is another passage, in the book of Ecclesiastes, (chap. ix. 4, 5, 6.) that I should be glad to hear your opinion of:——"For to him that is "joined to all the living, there is hope; for a "living dog is better than a dead lion. For the "living know, that they must die: but the dead "know not any thing, neither have they any "more a reward; for the memory of them is for-"gotten. Also, their love, and their hatred, and "their envy, is now perished: neither have they "any more a portion for ever, in any thing that "is done under the sun."

Minister. It is evident that the wise man, in this and many other of his observations, only considered things with respect to the present life, without any regard to a future state. In this view, his declarations are consistent with truth; but in no other. Let the following serve as a specimen:—"No man knoweth either love or hatred, by all "that is before them. All things come alike to "all; there is one event to the righteous and to "the wicked; to the good, and to the clean, and "to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to "him that sacrificeth not; as is the good, so is "the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that "feareth an oath," ver. 1, 2.——Nothing could possibly be more false than these observations, applied to a future state, though they are generally true in this life; for if there are no future rewards and punishments, no state of retribution hereafter, there is an end to all religion. But he does not finally

finally leave the matter so; but makes a most excellent conclusion to this book; saying—

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear (*or* revere) GOD, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For GOD shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing; whether it be good, or whether it be evil." chap. xii. 13, 14.

Thus, it is plain, that a living dog is better (more useful in this world) than a dead lion; which is no longer capable of doing good or evil: that a man, when he dies, loses all hopes of enjoyment in this life, and is rendered incapable of exercising the functions of it any longer; has no more a portion in any thing belonging thereto. Thus, in fine, all the observations that can be fairly made, upon this and similar passages, belong entirely to the present state of things; and, therefore, do not at all affect the argument, either one way or the other.

Friend. This is so plain, that nothing can be more so; but our *Saviour*'s words (St. John, ix. 4.) deserve a particular consideration:—"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work:"—which is explained commonly of the night of death, when no more works can be wrought.

Minister. Our Lord was diligent in his labour; he constantly went about doing good; he was never idle; he was in haste, till he had finished the work which his father had given him to do. In this he was—as in every thing else—a glorious pattern and example for us! And, O that we might follow him!—Now we may feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame; may take in the stranger,

ger, relieve the diſtreſſed, viſit the ſick, the fatherleſs, widows, and priſoners in their affliction; may bury the dead,—and conſtantly perform works of benevolence and mercy, while we remain in this ſtate of our exiſtence; which if we here neglect, we never can perform at all, and of conſequence, never obtain the rewards which are promiſed to the obedient: but as it is not the ſtate of rewards and puniſhments that we are now diſcourſing about, but a ſtate beyond—even the Reſtoration of all things; neither is the diſpute about what *men* can do after this life, but what GOD can do, or what he has purpoſed to do with and for them, in the ages to come, after the dreadful ſentence is paſt; whether they ſhall be left under the ſame, *while God exiſts*; or whether they ſhall ever be reſtored; or whether they ſhall be annihilated: this, you know, is the ſtate of the queſtion: ſome hold the *firſt*, and others the *laſt*: but I am apt to think both theſe opinions are extremes, and therefore judge it ſafeſt to maintain the *ſecond*, which I take to be the medium here.

Friend. Indeed I am convinced, that no circumſtance preceding the general judgment, can affect the argument; becauſe we are informed, that the condemnation of the wicked ſhall be at that day; then GOD will render to them according to their deeds, and will ſay to them, *Depart from me*, &c. —But the following texts of Scripture form a ſtrong objection to the univerſal Reſtoration, which I would wiſh you well to conſider.

"The expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh; "and the hypocrite's hope ſhall periſh: Whoſe "hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe truſt ſhall be a "ſpider's web. He ſhall lean upon his houſe, "but it ſhall not ſtand; he ſhall hold it faſt, but "it ſhall not endure. The heaven ſhall reveal "his iniquity, and the earth ſhall riſe up againſt "him

" him. The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and " they ſhall not eſcape; and their hope ſhall be " as the giving up of the ghoſt. His confidence " ſhall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it ſhall " bring him to the king of terrors. For what is " the hope of the wicked, though he hath gained, " when GOD taketh away his ſoul? Will GOD " hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him? " He that being often reproved, hardeneth his " neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that " without remedy. When a wicked man dieth, " his expectation ſhall periſh; and the hope of " unjuſt men periſheth. Becauſe I have called, " and ye have refuſed; I have ſtretched out my " hand, and no man regarded: But ye have ſet " at nought all my counſel, and would none of " my reproof: I alſo will laugh at your calamity, " I will mock when your fear cometh; When " your fear cometh as deſolation, and your de- " ſtruction cometh as a whirlwind; when diſtreſs " and anguiſh come upon you: Then ſhall they " call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall " ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me: For " that they hated knowledge, and did not chooſe " the fear of JEHOVAH. They would none of " my counſel: they deſpiſed all my reproof. " Therefore ſhall they eat of the fruit of their own " way, and be filled with their own devices." Prov. x. 28. Job, viii. 13, 14, 15, xx. 27. xi. 20. xviii. 14. xxvii. 8, 9. Prov. xxix. 1. xi. 7. i. 24—31.

Theſe, and abundance of other ſimilar paſſages, declare the future ſtate of the wicked to be deſperate, without hope; they and their hopes periſh together, as the ſpider's web; they have no hopes or proſpect of being redeemed; they can look for nothing but judgment and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour them as ſtubble fully dry, and

as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire. Solomon says, "The expectation of the wicked is "wrath," Prov. xi. 23. "As he loved cursing, "so shall it come unto him: as he delighted not "in blessing, so shall it be far from him. As he "cloathed himself with cursing, like as with his "garment; so shall it come into his bowels like "water, and like oil into his bones," Psal. cix. 17, 18. Indeed he can have no hopes, when he considers that he hath neglected so great a salvation all his life; that he hath set at nought GOD's counsels, despised his reproofs: that when his CREATOR called to him to turn, he had no ears to hear his voice; and therefore, when sorrow shall overtake, though he may cry, he shall not be regarded of GOD; and though he may seek, he shall not find: the Master of the house having risen up, and shut to the door, all knocking for entrance is in vain, even though such were to plead for admittance in the most earnest manner, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us;" he shall answer, "I know you not whence you are;" and though they may reiterate, and expostulate, saying, "We have eaten and "drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in "our streets;" he shall not be moved, but shall say to them, "I tell you, I know you not whence you "are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. "There shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth, "when they shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and "Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of "God, and they themselves thrust out." St. Luke, xiii. 25, 26, 27, 28. See also, St. Matth. vii. 21, 22, 23, xxv. 11, 12.

Minister. These are awful warnings, indeed; and were they attended to as they ought to be, would be sufficient, one would think, to deter men from their evil ways: I am glad that you have stated them in this most striking point of light;

light; for though they form no real objection to my views of GOD's dealing with men, as I understand the Scriptures, they are an insuperable bar to the opinions of those who deny a future state of retribution, which I think impossible for them to answer fairly. I shall, however, notice briefly, some things in this collection of Scriptures, in order that my sentiments may appear in their true light.

1. All the hopes of the wicked, ungodly, and hypocrites, shall perish at their death.

Perhaps they hoped to have lived long, to have enjoyed health, wealth, pleasure, and all worldly good, for many years; to have seen their children for many generations, flourishing for a long time on earth; but death destroys these hopes.

The hypocrites might have hoped that they should have been accepted with GOD, on the account of their birth, parentage, profession, rank among the people of GOD, observation of the externals of religion, &c. &c. all of which vain hopes do certainly perish at death.

The profane and wicked infidel, and practical atheist, might have hoped, either to have ceased to exist, or to have found some way of escaping the threatened punishment; but death destroys these hopes also.

2. Whatever may be the final intention of GOD towards these miserable creatures, it is evident they are shut up in a state of keen tormenting despair, or dreadful suspense, and may be fully persuaded that they shall never be released, of which it is likely they may not have even the most distant hope, or the least degree of knowledge—but, on the contrary, be in fearful expectation of more terrible punishment hereafter.

3. As they have lived and died in sin, their destruction, or misery, is certain—and there is no

remedy, that can prevent their experiencing the consequences of their crimes, and suffering the just punishment which shall be inflicted on them, according to their different deserts.

4. They who live and die in rebellion against God, will be eternally deprived of the glories and honours of the kingdom of *Christ*, which otherwise they might have possessed; will be excluded from a share in the first resurrection, and will be exposed to suffer the torments of the second death; which all must inevitably suffer, who remain incorrigible till the great day of judgment.

5. As God hath called, and they have refused, it is but reasonable to suppose, that they, in their turn, shall cry in vain; yet nevertheless, though he may long delay, he may hear their cries, and deliver them at last. See Psal. cvii. 13, 14, 15, 16.

David, in Psalm xxxivth says, "The face of "JEHOVAH is against them that do evil, to cut off "the remembrance of them from the earth." Our translators not understanding, or not entertaining an idea of the future Restoration, add, "*The* "*righteous* cry, and JEHOVAH heareth, and deli- "vereth them out of all their troubles." Whereas the Holy Ghost has put no such words as *the righteous* into the text there; but after saying, that the face of JEHOVAH is against them that do evil, to destroy them out of the world, and to make them forgotten, and their names to cease upon the earth, it adds a word that signifies *crying*, and then says, "And JEHOVAH heareth, and delivereth "them out of all their troubles:" See ver. 16, 17. This seems, indeed, like the doctrine of the Bible, which elsewhere says, speaking of the notoriously wicked; "O my God, make them like a wheel: "as the stubble before the wind. As the fire "burneth the wood, and as the flame setteth the "mountains on fire; so persecute them with thy tempest,

"tempeſt, and make them afraid with thy ſtorm. "Fill their faces with ſhame, that they may ſeek "thy name, O JEHOVAH. Let them be con- "founded, and troubled for ever; yea, let them "be put to ſhame, and periſh. And they ſhall "know (as the Hebrew word ſignifies, and as it is rendered in the old tranſlation) "that thou, "whoſe name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Moſt "High over all the earth," Pſal. lxxxiii. 13—18. ——Here we ſee, in a beautiful and clear manner, that one grand deſign of God in bringing judgments, and even what is called utter deſtruction, upon men, is that they may know that he is JEHOVAH, the true God: and there are but few intelligent Chriſtians, but muſt, in ſome meaſure, be able to conceive hopes concerning all thoſe to whom the knowledge of God is promiſed.

Though the threatenings in the prophecy of Ezekiel, both againſt the Jews and other nations, are uncommonly ſevere; yet they frequently cloſe with this gracious promiſe—"And they ſhall "know that I am JEHOVAH"—or ſomething ſimilar; as will evidently appear to thoſe who will be at the pains of examining the following paſſages in that book.

EZEKIEL, vi. 7, 10, 13, 14. vii. 4, 9, 27. xi. 10, 12. xii. 15, 16, 20. xiii. 9, 14, 21, 23. xiv. 8. xv. 7. xvi. 62. xx. 12, 20, 26, 38, 42, 44. xxii. 16. xxiii. 49. xxiv. 24, 27. xxv. 5, 7, 11, 17. xxvi. 6. xxviii. 22, 23, 24, 26. xxix. 6, 9, 16, 21. xxx. 8, 19, 25, 26. xxxii. 15. xxxiii. 29. xxxiv. 27. xxxv. 4, 9, 12, 15. xxxvi. 11, 23, 38. xxxvii. 6, 13. xxxviii. 23. xxxix. 6, 7, 22, 28.

Friend. But does not puniſhment harden and inflame offenders, inſtead of ſoftening and humbling them? As we read, Iſa. viii. 21. "They ſhall "curſe their King and their GOD, and look up- "ward:"

" ward:" and, in Rev. xvi. 9, 10, 11. " And " men were ſcorched with great heat, and blaſ- " phemed the name of GOD, which hath power " over theſe plagues: and they repented not to " give him glory. And they gnawed their " tongues for pain, and blaſphemed the GOD of " Heaven, becauſe of their pains and their ſores; " and repented not of their deeds."

Miniſter. Puniſhment, to a certain degree, inflames and enrages, in a moſt amazing manner; but continued longer, and heavier, produces a contrary effect—ſoftens, humbles, and ſubdues. When Ephraim, of old, bemoaned himſelf, he ſaid thus:—" Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was " chaſtiſed, as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the " yoke; turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned; for " thou art JEHOVAH, my GOD," Jer. xxxi. 18. The metaphor here uſed, expreſſes, in a moſt lively manner, the different effects of the ſame diſcipline, in its beginning, progreſs, and end. When a bullock firſt has the yoke laid on his neck, he frets, toſſes, and rages exceedingly; but, by a continuance of the diſcipline, he is ſubdued, brought down, humbled, and tamed, ſo as to become the moſt uſeful and gentle of animals. The ſons of Zion are repreſented as lying " at " the head of all the ſtreets, as a wild bull in a " net; full of the fury of JEHOVAH, the rebuke " of GOD," Iſai. li. 20. A wild bull, in a net, muſt be a furious creature; ſo are men, when firſt they are brought under the Divine correction. But GOD knows how to correct men, in ſuch a manner as to bring them to ſubmit to him, in due time; and though ſome are ſo ſunk in ſin as not to be reformed, by any means, in this life; yet that is no argument, that GOD is not able to ſubdue and bring down the proud and moſt rebellious, in another ſtate, by means that may be uſed effectually

there,

there, though they could not be uſed here. GOD ſays, by the prophet to Iſrael. "Becauſe I have "purged thee, and thou waſt not purged, thou "ſhalt not be purged from thy filthineſs any more "till I have cauſed my fury to reſt upon thee. So "will I make my fury towards thee to reſt, and my "jealouſy ſhall depart from thee; and I will be "quiet, and will be no more angry," Ezek. xxiv. 13. xvi. 42. Some ſins are ſo daring and preſumptuous, as to provoke GOD to threaten, that they ſhall not be purged away in this life; and, perhaps, their malignancy may be ſo great, that nothing that can be uſed here, is able to ſubdue them: Thus, when GOD threatened his people, of old, with deſtruction, they turned his threatenings into ridicule: inſtead of weeping, mourning, baldneſs, and girding with ſackcloth, to which God called them; there was nothing but "joy and gladneſs, ſlaying oxen, and killing "ſheep, eating fleſh, and drinking wine: Let us "eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. And it "was revealed in mine ears, by JEHOVAH of "Hoſts, Surely, this iniquity ſhall not be purged "from you till ye die, ſaith JEHOVAH, God of "Iſrael," Iſai. xxii. 12, 13, 14.

Thus, puniſhments are deſigned for the humbling of the proud: but if they fail of anſwering that purpoſe, as adminiſtered in the preſent ſtate, they will be continued and increaſed in future periods, to ſuch a degree, as ſhall bring all down in due time. Thoſe pains which produced that rage and blaſphemy which you mentioned, were all poured out on hardened ſinners in the preſent life; and were ſo terrible and ſevere as to produce thoſe fearful effects, but not ſufficiently ſo as to produce the contrary.

That puniſhment, to a certain degree, produces rage, but to a certain degree beyond, produces ſub-

ſubmiſſion; may be illuſtrated by the following fact, as well as many others, of the ſame nature.

In the former war between England and France, there was one Mr. M———, of Virginia, who was waggon-maſter-general in the army of the Provincials. He was guilty of abuſing his power, by frequently ſtriking the ſoldiers with his waggon-whip. Complaint being made, a court-martial was held, and he was ſentenced to receive five hundred laſhes; which ſentence was executed upon him. When firſt he began to feel the laſh, he was exceedingly enraged, and curſed thoſe who had thus ſentenced him; ſwearing, that if he lived to be releaſed, he would kill them all, if poſſible; for that he valued not his life, in the leaſt, but would revenge this diſgrace, by killing them, wherever he found them; and much more, to the ſame purpoſe. But, before he had received half his puniſhment, he declared, that he had not the leaſt diſpoſition to lift his hand againſt them; he ſaw clearly that they had acted right; that he had been entirely to blame; and that his puniſhment was juſt. After his correction was over, he was led quietly away, entirely cured of all his rage; from which he was as much freed by his puniſhment, as ever an effect was produced by a cauſe. He was healed of his wounds, and, I think, reſtored to his poſt.—Some time after the war was over, he was paſſing one day over thoſe mountains in Virginia, commonly called *The Blue Ridge*; and there he met alone one of the men who had condemned him, in the court-martial, to ſuch a puniſhment. He put him in mind of it; and told him, that it was now in his power to retaliate upon him. The other acknowledged that he was in his power; but added, "M——, you know you did wrong, "and deſerved the puniſhment you received; "and if you kill me, I declare, that we did right

"in

" in sentencing you to be whipped; I should do the " same, were it to do again; and so would you have " done, had you been in my place." Mr. M——, acknowledged the truth of it; and was so far from fulfilling his threatenings, that he suffered him to go in peace, highly commending him for his conduct. Mr. M—— may be still living: he was a general in the American army during the late war, and acquired great honour, for his valour and good conduct.

This I think is an argument *ad hominem*. I have often observed instances of the same nature, in a less degree; and I think it must be admitted, that although a certain degree of punishment will enflame, harden, and enrage; yet, farther degrees produce quite contrary effects. Nor is punishment the only thing in nature that produces contrary effects, according to the quantity used; almost all things do the same. Thus, water, with a little salt in it, will cause putrefaction, much sooner than perfectly fresh water; but let it be saturated with salt, and it will preserve bodies that are cast therein. A little salt cast on the earth is good manure, and causes fruitfulness; but a greater quantity produces the contrary effect, by causing barrenness. A little wine refreshes, cheers, invigorates; but, taken to excess, stupifies and intoxicates. And, to mention no more instances, a little smattering of knowledge puffs up the mind; but a greater degree, humbles and brings it down: From whence,

" *Drink deep, or never taste the spring.*"

Friend. But let me ask you: When you view the miserable state of fallen men, the inveterate obstinacy of their wills, the total aversion that many have to God and goodness, their confirmed habits

of evil, their amazing love of vice, their oppoſition to every method taken to reclaim them, and a thouſand other dreadful circumſtances, which you muſt have obſerved; are you not ready to deſpair of their recovery? not for any want of goodneſs in God, but through their total incapacity of ever being made better.

Miniſter. I muſt confeſs, this objection has great weight; and I have often been ready to give up my own ſalvation, on account of the evils of my own heart, which ſometimes riſe, and prevail in ſuch a manner, as almoſt drives me to deſpair; and I can find no relief, but by flying to *Jeſus*, as my only refuge, and truſting in his promiſes: And the caſe is the ſame with reſpect to the Reſtoration of all men. My weak reaſon tells me, that it cannot be; that it is abſolutely impoſſible, that ſuch hardened rebels can be ſo changed to eternity, as to become willing and obedient ſubjects; but when faith prevails, it informs me, that the things which are impoſſible with men, are poſſible with GOD; that nothing is too hard for JEHOVAH; and that he hath ſaid—"Behold, I am JEHOVAH, "the GOD of all fleſh: is there any thing too "hard for me?" Jer. xxxii. 27. And the example of Abraham has often proved a great ſupport to me in this caſe; "who, againſt hope, believed "in hope, that he might become the father of "many nations; according to that which was "ſpoken, So ſhall thy ſeed be: and being not "weak in faith, he conſidered not" the impediments, which, to the eye of reaſon, rendered the accompliſhment of the promiſes improbable, if not impoſſible. "He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of GOD, through unbelief; but was ſtrong in "faith, giving glory to GOD: And being fully "perſuaded that what he had promiſed, he was "able to perform," Rom. iv. 18, 19, 20, 21.

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This is the only way I anſwer this objection to my own ſatisfaction—GOD hath ſworn, that to him every knee ſhall bow, every tongue ſhall ſwear, Iſai. xlv. 23.—That in the name of *Jeſus*, every knee ſhall bow, of things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhall confeſs, that *Jeſus Chriſt* is Lord, to the glory of *God* the *Father*, Phil. ii. 10, 11. That it is the myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf, in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, to gather together, or rehead, in one, all things in *Chriſt*; both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him, Epheſ. i. 9, 10.—And having made peace through the blood of his croſs, he is determined to reconcile all things unto himſelf; whether things in heaven, or things on earth, Col. i. 20.—That he worketh all things after the counſel of his own will, Epheſ. i. 11.—That he will have all men to be ſaved, or reſtored, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. ii. 6.—That the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands, St. John, iii. 35.—And that *Chriſt* hath ſaid, "All that the Father giveth me, ſhall come "unto me; and him that cometh unto me, I will "in no wiſe caſt out," St. John, vi. 37.—When I conſider theſe, and many ſuch like promiſes, which I find in the Scriptures; and that he that hath promiſed, is able to perform; hath wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, ſufficient to accompliſh all his words, how difficult or impoſſible ſoever the matter may ſeem, to our carnal, vain, and weak reaſoning; I caſt the whole of my concern upon him; judging, that he is faithful who hath promiſed, and that, in his own time, he will fulfil all his purpoſes, and all his promiſes. But I confeſs to you, that it requires a faith, if poſſible, more ſtrong than that of Abraham, to believe the doc-

trine of the Reſtoration ſtedfaſtly, in the midſt of ſo much evil as prevails in the world, and which ſeems to render it impoſſible: But my only hope is in GOD.

But, to encourage us the more, there are not only promiſes of what GOD will do, but examples of what he hath done, recorded in Scripture; as the caſes of *Manaſſeh*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Saul*, and many of the murderers of our Lord, prieſts, and even Phariſees, are left on record, as patterns of GOD's long-ſuffering, power, mercy, and love.—And I would adviſe thoſe Chriſtians that doubt of the univerſal Reconciliation of all things, to remember St. Paul's words to the Coloſſians, on this ſubject, chap. i. 21. "And "you that were ſome time alienated, and enemies "in your mind, by wicked works, yet now hath he "reconciled;" as a proof and example of his power to reconcile all things. Let all remember their own ſtubbornneſs; and then, inſtead of reviling and deriding a truth which GOD has revealed, they will adore him, of whom, through whom, and to whom, are all things; who "doeth ac-"cording to his will in the army of heaven, and "among the inhabitants of the earth; and none "can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?" Rom. xi. 36. Dan. iv. 35.

Friend. But allowing that God has power to change the hearts of the vileſt of men, is not the exerciſe of that power evidently limited? for I find it written in Rev. xxii. 11.—"He that is unjuſt, "let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is filthy, let "him be filthy ſtill: and he that is righteous, let "him be righteous ſtill; and he that is holy, let "him be holy ſtill." By theſe words it ſeems to be intimated, that the characters of both the wicked and the righteous, ſhall at ſome period be

ſo

ſo confirmed and fixed, as to admit of no change or alteration.

Miniſter. This appears to be a conſiderable difficulty, but can by no means overthrow the ſyſtem of the Reſtoration, which ſeems eſtabliſhed upon many gracious promiſes. The words ſeem to refer to a particular period, even when the Lord ſhall come, and ſhew that his coming will not, (as ſome ſuppoſe) change the characters of men; but that all ſhall continue, for a certain time, in the ſame character as before. But, though "he that "is unjuſt, ſhall be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is fil- "thy, ſhall be filthy ſtill"—during the age of judgment; and ſhall have the dreadful curſe pronounced upon him; for, "If any man love not "the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be anathema, "Maran-atha: that is, Accurſed, the Lord cometh: 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Yet I truſt that I have proved, that the vileſt ſhall be finally changed; and conſequently, that theſe words muſt be underſtood with ſome limitation. And thus though this text is plainly contrary to the opinion of thoſe who ſuppoſe that all the human race ſhall be admitted into the kingdom of heaven at the day of judgment, yet it may be well reconciled to the ſyſtem laid down in theſe Dialouges; eſpecially if it can be proved that ſimilar expreſſions are uſed, where a limitation is ſuppoſed, or neceſſarily implied.

Friend. Yes; if you can find ſimilar expreſſions uſed for limited times, it will be ſatisfactory.

Miniſter. St. Paul ſays, 1 Cor. xiv. 38. "But "if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant:" But we can hardly ſuppoſe that he meant without limitation. So we read of the Jews, that "God "hath given them the ſpirit of ſlumber; eyes "that they ſhould not ſee, and ears that they "ſhould not hear, unto this day." And David ſaith;——"Let their table be made a ſnare, and "a trap,

" a trap, and a ſtumbling-block, and a recom-
" pence unto them. Let their eyes be darkened
" that they ſhould not ſee, and bow down their
" back ALWAY," Rom. xi. 8, 9, 10. Theſe ex-
preſſions of their remaining in a blinded, harden-
ed, and reprobate ſtate, are ſtronger than thoſe—
" He that is unjuſt let him be unjuſt ſtill," &c.
for, inſtead of *ſtill*, the word *alway* is uſed; and
yet we are informed, that this " blindneſs in part
" has (only) happened to Iſrael, until the fulneſs
" of the Gentiles be come in: And ſo all Iſrael
" ſhall be ſaved." And that " GOD hath con-
" cluded them all (*or*, ſhut them up together) in
" unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all,"
even all whom he had ſhut up, or concluded in
unbelief. And, as I obſerved before, David ſays;
" Fill their faces with ſhame, that they may ſeek
" thy name, O JEHOVAH. Let them be con-
" founded and troubled for ever: yea, let them
" be put to ſhame, and periſh; That *they* may
" know that thou whoſe name alone is JEHOVAH,
" art the Moſt High over all the earth," Pſal.
lxxxiii. 16, 17, 18. Many other ſimilar paſſages
might be mentioned; but theſe may ſuffice,
to ſhew, that often where the words *Let it*, or
Let them be, in ſuch-and-ſuch a ſtate, they only
intend a certain period, until another diſpenſation
takes place. As for righteouſneſs, holineſs, and
happineſs, they have quite a different foundation
from ſin and impurity, as I have ſhewn before;
and therefore, no arguments uſed in favour of the
total deſtruction of evil, can, in the leaſt, prove,
that goodneſs, which is the Divine eſſence, ſhall
ceaſe; but the contrary: and thoſe who are firmly
joined to the LORD, and have continued with
him through the ſtate of temptation, ſhall never
ceaſe to be righteous, nor be ſeparated from their
Head, from whom they ſhall derive eternal life:

for

for CHRIST hath ſaid, "Becauſe I live, ye ſhall "live alſo." St. John. xiv. 19.

CHRIST, at his coming, will bring every hidden thing to light, and ſhall take off all diſguiſes; ſo that he that is unjuſt, ſhall appear unjuſt; and he that is filthy, ſhall be diſcovered: hypocriſy ſhall be no more. "The vile perſon ſhall be no more "called liberal, nor the churl ſaid to be bounti-"ful," Iſai. xxxii. 5. "Then ſhall ye return, and "diſcern between the righteous and the wicked; "and between him that ſerveth God, and him "that ſerveth him not," Mal. iii. 18. The judgment of God is according to truth, and is deſigned to make an entire diſcovery of all perſons, and all ſecret things, "that every mouth may be ſtop-"ped, and all the world may become guilty be-"fore God," Rom. iii. 19. But though judgment has its great uſe in diſcovering, laying open, convincing, and condemning; and puniſhment, in deſtroying, ſubduing, and humbling; yet the powerful, ſaving grace of GOD, and the operation of the divine Spirit, muſt have the glory of reſtoring, or creating men anew; and the blood of JESUS muſt cleanſe their ſouls from the guilt and pollution of ſin. Evil muſt be deſtroyed out of them: this is done by afflictions; and goodneſs muſt be reſtored; this is done by God's renewing power and grace.

But the objection may be anſwered another way, without any of this reaſoning, by conſidering the ſubject comparatively. Thus: As God only is holy; as none are good but he, in an abſolute ſenſe; as he putteth no truſt in his holy ones, and the heavens are not clean in his ſight, and his angels he charged with folly; (See Job, xv. 15. iv. 18.) and as all intelligences, compared with him, are unjuſt and unclean; ſo, thoſe who have lived and died in rebellion againſt God, and in the pollu-

tion

tion of ſin, may remain unjuſt and filthy, compared with the ſaints, thoſe veſſels of honour and glory, who have purged themſelves. "But in a "great houſe there are not only veſſels of gold "and ſilver, but alſo of wood, and of earth; and "ſome to honour, and ſome to diſhonour. If a "man, therefore, purge himſelf from theſe (ſins), "he ſhall be a veſſel of honour, ſanctified and "meet for the maſter's uſe, and prepared unto "every good work," 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. Here we may obſerve, that in our Lord's great houſe there ſhall be divers veſſels of various kinds, yet all uſeful, but ſome more highly ſo than others; that honour and diſhonour are comparative terms; and that the way to become veſſels of the higheſt honour at laſt, is to purge ourſelves from iniquity while on earth, by obeying the truth. For it muſt appear evident, from the nature of things, that there will always be an immenſe difference between thoſe who ſhall be kings and prieſts to God, and thoſe who ſhall be ſubdued in the ages to come, ſo as to be ſubjects, but who ſhall not attain to that honour and glory, which they ſhall have who ſuffer with Chriſt here, and ſhall be glorified with him hereafter.

Friend. Since I have converſed with you I muſt acknowledge that many things have appeared in a different light from what they did before; and if I do not wholly embrace the doctrine of the Reſtoration, I muſt allow that there is much more to be ſaid for it than I could have imagined. But I have ſtill ſome difficulties that I wiſh to propoſe. There is a terrible threatening, which is indeed the laſt in the Bible, that I ſhould be glad to hear your thoughts upon, which is thus expreſſed, (Rev. xxii. 18, 19,) "For I teſtify unto every "man, that heareth the words of the prophecy of "this book; If any man ſhall add unto theſe

"things,

" things, GOD ſhall add unto him the plagues that " are written in this book: And if any man ſhall " take away from the words of the book of this pro- " phecy, GOD ſhall take away his part out of the " book of life, and out of the holy city, and from " the things which are written in this book:" But I can almoſt foreſee how you will anſwer this; that though the plagues that are written in this book, ſhall be added, yet mercy ſhall finally rejoice againſt judgment; and though a man's part may be taken out of the book of life, and he, in conſequence, ſuffer the torments of the ſecond death: yet, as the time will come, when there ſhall be no more death of any kind, neither ſorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain; his Reſtoration may be certainly inferred; and though his part in the heavenly city may be forfeited, ſo that he may never become one of thoſe who ſhall reign therein, nor yet have a conſtant dwelling there; he may nevertheleſs, enter as a worſhipper, and a ſubject of the great King; and may drink of the water of life; feed on the fruits of the tree of life, and be healed by its leaves; and be one of the happy inhabitants of the new earth, which God will create.

Miniſter. Yes, my friend: But though this Scripture may be eaſily reconciled to the plan laid down in theſe dialogues; it contains ſuch threatenings as are very terrible indeed; and ſhould make us exceeding careful not to contradict what God hath here revealed, by adding vain interpretations of our own, contrary to the ſenſe of the text; nor in any wiſe to explain away, or weaken, the force of either the threatenings or promiſes, ſet forth in this wondrous book. The amazing torments which they ſhall feel that have theſe plagues added to them, and the dreadful loſs which they ſhall ſuſtain that have their part taken

out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, cannot be even conceived: And it being poſſible to forfeit this glorious portion entirely, and for ever, made St. Paul warn the Hebrews in ſuch a ſolemn manner as he doth throughout the whole epiſtle.—Oh, what affecting advice is the following!—"Looking diligently, leſt any man fail of "the grace of God; leſt any root of bitterneſs, "ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby many be "defiled: Leſt there be any fornicator, or pro-"fane perſon, as Eſau; who, for one morſel of "meat, ſold his birthright. For ye know, how "that afterward, when he would have inherited "the bleſſing, he was rejected: for he found no "place of repentance, though he ſought it care-"fully, with tears," Heb. xii. 15, 16, 17.

"Poor Eſau repented too late,
"That once he his birthright deſpis'd;
"And ſold for a morſel of meat,
"What could not too highly be priz'd.

"How great was his anguiſh, when told,
"The bleſſing he ſought to obtain
"Was gone, with the birthright he ſold;
"And none could recal it again!"

Thus, though Eſau, as well as Jacob, was bleſſed concerning things to come; (See Heb. xi. 20.) yet the birthright, and the particular bleſſings connected therewith, he loſt for ever: And ſo is it poſſible that we may loſe our parts in the holy city, or no ſuch threatenings would ever have been made. For it is a maxim with me—That God never warns, where there is no danger to fear; and never encourages us to hope, where there is no poſſibility of obtaining.

As the glorious and univerſal deliverance of all men from the bondage of ſin, and their obtaining an

an inheritance in the new earth, was clearly pointed out by the great year of Jubilee, under the law; in which every ſervant went out free, and every man returned to his poſſeſſion, and to his family; (See Lev. xxv. 10.) So, the poſſibility of being cut off from the holy city, for ever, was pointed out by that notable exception, ver. 29, 30.—— "And if a man ſell a dwelling-houſe in a walled "city, then he may redeem it within a whole year "after it is ſold; within a full year, may he re-"deem it. And if it be not redeemed within the "ſpace of a full year, then the houſe that is in the "walled city ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever to him "that bought it, throughout his generations: it "ſhall not go out in the Jubilee."

Something ſimilar to this may be found in Rev. iii. 11.—"Behold, I come quickly; hold that faſt "which thou haſt, that no man take thy crown:" And the 5th verſe is alſo worthy of conſideration —"He that overcometh, the ſame ſhall be cloth-"ed in white raiment; and I will not blot out "his name out of the book of life; but I will con-"feſs his name before my Father, and before his "angels."—O, what promiſes are made to overcomers! That they ſhall eat of the tree of life, which is in the midſt of the Paradiſe of GOD; ſhall have a crown of life; ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death; ſhall eat of the hidden manna; ſhall have a white ſtone, and a new name, which no man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it; ſhall have power over the nations, &c. even as Chriſt received of the Father: ſhall walk with him in white; ſhall be eſteemed worthy to be companions and friends of God; ſhall be clothed in white; ſhall have their names enrolled among the followers of the Lamb, as called, choſen, and faithful; ſhall be confeſſed by the Son of God, before his Father, and the holy

angels; ſhall be made pillars in the temple of God, and ſhall go no more out; ſhall have the name of GOD written upon their foreheads, and the name of the holy city, New Jeruſalem, and Chriſt's new, heavenly name; ſhall ſit with him upon his throne, even as he overcame, and is ſet down with the Father, upon his throne; ſhall inherit all things; ſhall be called the ſons of God: See Rev. ii. 7, 10, 11, 17, 26, 27. iii. 4, 5, 12, 21. xvii. 14. xxi. 7.

The apoſtle aſſures us, that "If (we are) children, then (are we) heirs; heirs of God, and "joint heirs with Chriſt; if ſo be that we ſuffer "with him, that we may be alſo glorified together." And then adds—"For I reckon that "the ſufferings of the preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall "be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 17, 18. "When "Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appear; then ſhall "ye (his ſaints) alſo appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 4. "We know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him "as he is," 1 John, iii. 2. But let none of thoſe who believe themſelves the heirs of this kingdom, &c. dare to indulge themſelves in ſin, under a notion that God can never caſt them off; as ſome do.

A Preacher whom I once knew, encouraged this wickedly preſumptuous diſpoſition ſo far, as, openly, to ſay: "God cannot damn me: He can "as ſoon ceaſe to be God, as he can caſt me off: "even though I ſhould ſin ever ſo much. If I "ſhould kill a man, he could not damn me; nay, "if I ſhould kill all the men in the world, he "cannot damn me."—This man was rigid in trifles, religiouſly ſcrupulous in frivolous things, ſuch as *dreſs*, *&c.* yet he made traffick of the human-kind, engaged in war, and performed acts of cruelty and outrage with as little tenderneſs as may be imagined! He long bloated himſelf with the notion

notion of God's peculiar favour—but, near the close of his life, the displeasure of the Almighty coming visibly upon him, this *rhapsodist* changed his tone, and exclaimed, that God had forsaken him!

I would advise all men, of that bold, presuming, self-confident spirit, to read and consider well those words, in Jer. xxii. 24. "As I live, saith JEHO-"VAH, though *Coniah*, the son of *Jehoiakim*, king "of Judah, were the signet upon my right hand; "yet would I pluck thee thence."

Consider, first, who speaks. JEHOVAH: He not only speaks, but he confirms his threatening with an oath; and, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, by his own life; "As I live, "saith JEHOVAH, though *Coniah*, the son of *Jehoia-*"*kim*, king of Judah;" though he is of the family of *David*, with whom I have made an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; and though he is anointed king over my people; I will not spare him: yea, though he "were the signet "upon my right hand; yet would I pluck thee "thence." Signets, upon the hands of ancient Persian monarchs, were those seals with which their decrees were sealed and confirmed: so that no man could reverse them. Now, God declares, that if this man was ever so dear, and as necessary, to him, as the signet on the right hand of a king is to its owner; that though he was not able to govern his kingdom without his assistance; though he had been the dearest and most useful thing; he would entirely cast him off, for his transgressions. And how much more so, if it be considered, that no man is necessary to God; that man cannot be profitable to him; that neither our wickedness can hurt him, nor our righteousness benefit him: (See Job, xxii. 2, 3. xxxv. 6, 7, 8. Psal. xvi. 2, 3.) And that he threatens to punish the only family that

that he had known on earth, for all their iniquities; Amos, iii. 2. What have not thoſe to fear, who have been placed in high ſtations, entruſted with precious treaſures, great abilities, opportunities, &c. and have abuſed them!——Let ſuch read, and ſeriouſly conſider, St. Luke, xii. 42—48. St. Matth. xxiv. 45—51. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21, 22.

Friend. Theſe conſiderations are, on one hand, glorious and ſublime, beyond conception; and, on the other, terrible, beyond deſcription. But ſome ſay, That if they are only admitted into the kingdom of God, and are not caſt into the lake of fire, it is the higheſt of their ambition: that they never aſpire to be kings and prieſts; nor to obtain a crown, throne, ſceptre, &c. And others ſay, That if they are ever, to all eternity, to be delivered from their miſery, that it is a matter of little conſequence to them whether they are followers of Chriſt here, or not.

Miniſter. Theſe kind of reflections are frequently thrown out by the enemies of the Reſtoration, to caſt an odium upon the doctrine: But if they were to hear a man ſay; "If I am juſt ſuf- "fered to enter into this kingdom, and am not "condemned as a rebel, it is all I wiſh; I deſire "neither the riches, honours, pleaſures, conve- "niencies, nor even the neceſſaries, that many of "the inhabitants enjoy: all I aſk is to be exempt- "ed from the pain and ſhame of public puniſh- "ment:" And another was to add—"I can ſee "little or no difference between being made heir "apparent to the crown, poſſeſſing all the privi- "leges, honours, dignities, &c. of a prince of the "blood; and being hanged, drawn, and quar- "tered, for high treaſon; ſince even that puniſh- "ment, painful and ſhameful as it is, muſt come "to an end:" I aſk, Would they not eſteem both

both theſe men in a ſtate of inſanity, or worſe; entirely devoid of all ſenſe and reaſon? Yet, this unreaſonable language, is not worthy to be named in the ſame day with that which you mentioned. The difference is ſo great, I cannot find language to expreſs it. I therefore conſider all ſuch perſons as madmen, with whom it is not worth while to reaſon; who underſtand not what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm.

Friend. So they appear to me. But the ſyſtem you have laid down, appears equally calculated to check preſumption and deſpair, and to cure all ſuch ſpiritual madneſs; provided that they will attend to it.—But, what will you ſay to the doctrine of *annihilation? that* may not be liable to the ſame objections as *endleſs damnation*; and ſo the wicked may be puniſhed with *everlaſting deſtruction*, and deſtroyed, ſoul and body, in hell; and yet, at laſt, all beings that are in exiſtence may be made happy. The Scripture ſeems, in many places, to favour this idea; and the works of nature ſeem to confirm it. For inſtance; many fruits and animals periſh, before they arrive at perfection; and why may it not be ſo with the ſouls and bodies of men? they are no where ſaid to be raiſed to incorruption, or immortality; but to be deſtroyed, to be caſt into the lake of fire, to be burnt up, root and branch; to be conſumed, devoured, burnt up as chaff, thorns, &c. I need not mention particular texts; becauſe the general part of the threatenings in the Scriptures run in that ſtile. And I have ſometimes of late reaſoned with myſelf, that the ſecond death muſt end either in the reſtoration or annihilation of thoſe who were caſt therein; for there ſeemed ſomething in *endleſs miſery*, that ſurpaſſed my belief, at times. But I could not ſatisfy myſelf, whether the wicked would be finally reſtored to ſome degree of happineſs, or totally deſtroyed;

deſtroyed; and was apt to think the latter, as it ſeemed a ſtrange figure of ſpeech to call *deſtruction*, Reſtoration.—Pray, have you ever thought upon this matter?

Miniſter. There are but three poſſible things that can befal thoſe who are caſt into the ſecond death; either *endleſs miſery*, *total annihilation*, or *Reſtoration:* a fourth cannot be thought upon; and but one of theſe can be true. Now, where there are only three poſſibilities, of which only one *can* be true, and one *muſt* be true; there are theſe two ways of diſcovering the truth: Firſt, if two of the propoſitions are proved to be abſurd, the third muſt ſtand: 2dly, if one be proved true, the others muſt fall to the ground of conſequence. I have taken the ſecond method; and having ſhewed that the doctrine of the Reſtoration is not abſurd, and therefore that it is true; conſequently, the others are falſe.—But, beſides this way of arguing, there are three circumſtances which prove to my ſatisfaction, that *annihilation* is not a truth.

1. That at the very time that the wicked are deſtroyed, they are ſaid to be tormented with fire and brimſtone; and that they have no reſt, day nor night; and the continuance of this is for no ſhort time, (as would probably be the caſe, if the intention of God was only to deſtroy them out of being) but for the age of ages. Rev. xiv. 10. 11.

2. They are put to ſhame, and periſh, that they may know the Lord; as I have noticed before: See Pſal. xxxiv. 16, 17. lxxxiii. 16, 17, 18.—— and the obſervations I have made upon theſe paſſages in the dialogues.

3. But that on which I dare venture the whole cauſe, is, that God hath abſolutely promiſed to reſtore and bring again thoſe whom he hath utterly deſtroyed.

Friend.

Friend. Can you prove that? For if you can, it will ſettle the whole controverſy.

Miniſter. I truſt I can, in many inſtances: But I will fix upon one that is full to the purpoſe, and unexceptionable; and that is, the caſe of *Sodom*, and her daughters, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*; who, "giving themſelves over to fornication, and "going after ſtrange fleſh, are ſet forth for an ex- "ample, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire," Jude, 7.

As they are ſet forth for an example in their puniſhment, ſo alſo in their reſtoration: For we may certainly argue, that if any of the human race ſhall be annihilated, the inhabitants of *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, &c. will be; as they were condemned with an overthrow, and made an example to thoſe who ſhould after live ungodly, 2 Pet. ii. 6. But theſe wicked nations ſhall have their captivity returned; ſhall return to their former eſtate; and ſhall be received by *Jeruſalem*, as daughters, in the everlaſting covenant: *Jeruſalem* and her daughters, more wicked themſelves, than *Sodom* and her daughters, ſhall be reſtored at the ſame time; ſhall remember their ways, and be aſhamed; ſhall never open mouth any more to glory over the meaneſt of mankind; when the great JEHOVAH ſhall be pacified towards *Jeruſalem*, for all that ſhe has done, and towards *Sodom* and *Samaria*, for all that they have done alſo, inaſmuch as they ſhall return from their long captivity, and be given to *Jeruſalem* for daughters: See Ezek. xvi. 53, 55, 61, 63.

Now, by Sodom and her daughters being returned from their long and dreadful captivity, we muſt underſtand one of three things: either, firſt, the return of their deſcendants; or, ſecondly, the reſtoration of the land whereon the cities ſtood; or, laſtly, the reſtoration of thoſe very perſons who were deſtroyed.

It cannot be the firſt; for there are none of their deſcendants remaining on earth: all were deſtroyed by fire and brimſtone: none of the inhabitants eſcaped, Lot and his daughters excepted: who were only ſojourners, and were deſcendants of Terah, and relations to Abraham.

As it cannot be the firſt, let us try the ſecond. A very ingenious gentleman ſuppoſes, that in the time of the Millenium, the Dead Sea ſhall be turned into land, and ſhall again become a beautiful, well-watered plain, and be given to the poſterity of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*: For he argues, and ſeemingly very juſtly, that as God promiſed *Abraham* all the land which he could ſee from the place where he then ſtood; (See Gen. xiii. 14, 15, 16, 17.) and as the plain of *Sodom* was in ſight, it was included in the grant: and, though the Dead Sea now occupies the place where thoſe cities ſtood; yet God's promiſe cannot fail: and, therefore, in the Millenium, the Dead Sea ſhall be ſwallowed up, and the place ſhall become a fruitful plain. But whoever will read Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9, 10, 11. may plainly ſee, that the waters that ſhall iſſue out from under the threſhold of the holy houſe, ſhall be brought into the Dead Sea; and ſhall ſo heal thoſe deadly waters, that they ſhall become fruitful, and bring forth fiſh in great abundance; exceeding many, like the great ſea, which is now called the *Mediterranean*; which fiſh ſhall be more uſeful for food, to the innumerable inhabitants that ſhall then be in that happy country, than all the vegetables that would grow there, even though the whole place was turned into a fruitful garden.

Friend. But are you certain, that by *the ſea*, is meant *the Dead Sea*, or *Lake of Sodom?*

Miniſter. Yes. 1. Becauſe all the other waters in thoſe parts, produce great plenty of excellent fiſh; and

and, therefore, need not healing. 2. Becauſe fiſhers ſhall ſtand upon the banks of the ſea, from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim, places that are well known to be contiguous to the Dead Sea; one of which is nearly at the north-eaſt corner, the other at the weſt end of the ſame. 3. The marſhes, and the miry places thereof, ſhall not be healed; but ſhall be given to ſalt, as ſpecimens of what the whole is at this time; which barren and deadly ſpots ſhall remain, as ſtanding evidences of the truth of Scripture, and the exact fulfilment of prophecy.

Thus, as *Sodom* cannot be reſtored in her poſterity, there being none remaining on earth; neither ſhall the Dead Sea be turned into land, in the Millenium; it follows, as the only remaining ſenſe of the return of *Sodom's* captivity, that thoſe very inhabitants, who were deſtroyed by fire and brimſtone from heaven, ſhall be reſtored to a ſtate of felicity: And thus, both the doctrine of *annihilation* and *endleſs damnation*, fall to the ground at once.

Friend. But as it is the ſecond death, after the day of judgment, that is to deſtroy the bodies and ſouls of the wicked in hell; perhaps, the inhabitants of *Sodom*, *Samaria*, and *Jeruſalem*, may be reſtored before that period, and may not be caſt into the lake of fire.

Miniſter. It is evident by our *Saviour's* words, (for we muſt not contradict any part of the Scriptures) that this will not be the caſe: for he ſaith, That it ſhall be more tolerable for the land (*that is*, the inhabitants) of *Sodom*, in the day of judgment, than for the cities where his goſpel was preached, and his miracles wrought, and yet the inhabitants remained impenitent: See St. Matth. xi. 24. x. 15. St. Mark, vi. 11. St. Luke, x. 12. From all which paſſages it is evident, that the in-

habitants of *Sodom* will be condemned in the day of judgment, and punifhed in the lake of fire: and though their mifery will not be fo great as that of the inhabitants of the cities where our Saviour preached, and performed his mighty works; yet they will be miferable in that day: and, confequently, the return of their captivity is not be expected, till after the creation of the new earth. Therefore, it is plain, that the lake of fire is not deſigned to annihilate thofe who are caft therein; fince all that are not found written in the book of life, at the day of judgment, will be caft into the lake of fire. They whofe names are in the book of life, will be happy. The inhabitants of *Sodom* will be miferable, in fome degree; therefore, will not be found written in the book of life; confequently, will be caft into the lake of fire. They will be reftored; their captivity fhall be returned: therefore the lake of fire fhall not annihilate them. They are fet forth for an example in their punifhment; and confequently, in their Reftoration.—I need not purfue this argument farther: It appears evident to me; and, till it be fairly anfwered, I fhall add nothing more.

Friend. I lately read a fermon written by one Mr. B—— in which the writer brings many ftrong reafons for the eternity of Hell torments, moft of which have already been mentioned and anfwered in thefe Dialogues; but he makes ufe of one which has not yet been brought under our conſideration, which is, That the damned are under the neceffity of conftantly committing freſh fin, and therefore as they will always continue to fin againft God, fo of neceffity their punifhment can never ceafe. Have you ever thought of this?

Miniſter. Yes, I have frequently heard it mentioned; but as it appears totally void of all foundation in the Scripture, it hardly deſerves any notice.

tice. The objections that I feel myſelf concerned to treat with ſeriouſneſs and reſpect, and candidly to anſwer, are thoſe which appear to be drawn from the book of divine Revelation; but if I muſt attend to all thoſe which the ingenuity of men might raiſe againſt the doctrine of the Reſtoration, I ſhould not only have a very hard taſk, but ſhould never know when I had done, and beſides the diſcourſe would dwindle into trifling and conjectures, very unſuitable to the nature and importance of ſuch an awful ſerious ſubject. I muſt obſerve, that this objection is nothing but a raſh ungrounded aſſertion, or bold conjecture, without the leaſt foundation either in Scripture or reaſon, and if I was to aſſert juſt the contrary, I cannot ſee why my aſſertion would not be a ſufficient anſwer. Nevertheleſs, leſt it ſhould be thought that any objection can be raiſed, that cannot be fairly anſwered, and that I knowing the ſtrength of this, would willingly evade it, I will ſay a few words upon it. The Scriptures univerſally hold forth the idea, that men will be judged, condemned, and puniſhed according to the deeds done in the body. God "will render to every man according to his "deeds," Rom. ii. 6. "For we muſt all appear "before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every "one may receive the things done in his body, "according to that he hath done, whether it be "good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10.

"And that ſervant which knew his Lord's will, "and prepared not himſelf, neither did accord-"ing to his will, ſhall be beaten with many "ſtripes; but he that knew not, and did commit "things worthy of ſtripes, ſhall be beaten with "few ſtripes," St. Luke, xii. 47, 48. Theſe, and all the paſſages that ſpeak of future puniſhment, conſtantly hold it forth as a juſt retribution for the evil deeds done in this life; but never intimate any

any thing of what this objection holds forth, of punishment being continued *ad infinitum* for crimes committed hereafter. Besides, it is plain that punishments or corrections are intended to stop men from sinning, and under the divine agency to take away their sins. "By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the "fruit to take away his sin," Isai. xxvii. 9. This is universally allowed to be the design of troubles and sorrows in the present life, and why not in the next state also? the Scripture says nothing to forbid this idea, but much to encourage it; particularly that awful passage where the prophet says, "And it was revealed in mine ears by JEHOVAH "of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged "from you, TILL YE DIE, saith the Lord God of "hosts," Isai. xxii. 14. If then iniquity shall be purged away after death, it is certain that men shall not always continue to sin in a future state, for they must cease to commit iniquity, before it can be purged away. And though their punishments may at first cause them to rage, (as we see is frequently the case in this world) yet shall they continue until the most stubborn shall be entirely subdued and humbled.

Friend. There is another argument of this same kind, viz. that is not founded upon any particular text of Scripture, which is directly contrary to the one you have been answering, which I have formerly thought unanswerable in favour of the doctrine of endless punishment, which is the *infinity* of sin, being against an infinite object, containing infinite hatefulness, and justly therefore deserving infinite punishment. Sin is a crime of infinite magnitude, because God is a Being of infinite majesty and perfection. Every crime justly demerits punishment proportioned to its malignity! and consequently every offence against God demerits infi-

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nite punishment. No mere creature can ever suffer an infinity of punishment in any limited duration. It follows therefore, that a sinner deserves to be *eternally* punished. Farther, every man is under infinite obligations to devote himself wholly to the service of God, his infinitely glorious Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor. To violate an infinite obligation, is to commit a crime of infinite malignity. A crime of infinite malignity, deserves infinite punishment. Can it ever be proved then that everlasting, or *endless punishment* is not the proper desert of a life of sin? I have often said, That this argument trite and commonas it is, never was, nor ever would be fairly answered; nevertheless, I am willing to hear what you have to say upon it.

Minister. As this argument is often urged, as of the greatest weight, and as you have stated it in its greatest possible force, I shall endeavour to answer it fairly, and particularly.

If sin is *infinite*, then we must ascribe to it one of the perfections of the Deity, which strikes me as something absurd, if not something worse: *sin*, a *privation*, an *act of a worm*, *infinite?* Actions must, in my opinion take their denomination from the actors, and not from the objects. Infinite actions, or actions of infinite magnitude require infinite power to perform them. If sin is of infinite magnitude, goodness is more so, as deriving a power from God to the performance of it. But if you grant that David spoke in the name of the Mediator in Psalm xvi. you may be at once furnished with a proof, that even goodness, in the highest state in which it ever was exhibited in the world, was not considered as of infinite magnitude by the great performer. "Thou hast said unto *Jehovah*, "Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth "not to thee. But to the saints that are in the "earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my "delight."

" delight," Ver. 2, 3. If acts of goodneſs were of infinite magnitude they muſt extend to God, but the ſpeaker, in theſe words, be he who he may, David, or Chriſt, was careful to let us know that he did not conceive his acts of goodneſs infinite. And if acts of goodneſs are not infinite, it would be highly abſurd to call evil actions infinite, which proceed wholly from the creature.

I grant indeed that there is a paſſage of Scripture which mentions the word *infinite* as belonging to ſin and iniquity, but then it is mentioned in ſuch a connection as ſhews it to be uſed as Joſephus frequently mentions it, for a very great multitude. And thus it is uſed by many good authors, who certainly do not mean to uſe it in the firſt and proper ſenſe of the word. The Sacred Writer, in the paſſage alluded to, takes particular care to guard us againſt any ſuch idea, as though ſin was of infinite magnitude, or even virtuous and righteous actions, which approach far nearer to infinity, as having their ſource from the fountain of infinite goodneſs. For Eliphaz ſays, " Can a man " be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe may " be profitable unto himſelf? Is it any pleaſure " to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is " it gain to him that thou makeſt thy ways per- " fect? Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? " Will he enter with thee into Judgment? Is not " thy wickedneſs great? and thine iniquities in- " finite?" Job. xxii. 2—5. And language very ſimilar to the above is uſed by Elihu, " If thou " ſinneſt, what doeſt thou againſt him? or if thy " tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doeſt thou " unto him? If thou be righteous, what giveſt " thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? " Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and " thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man," Job. xxxv. 6, 7, 8.

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Theſe expreſſions, if they teach any thing, I ſhould think expreſſly declare, that no actions of men can by any means be of *infinite* magnitude, in the ſenſe in which we commonly underſtand that word; though their numbers and magnitudes may be ſo great as to be ſtiled *infinite*, as the word is ſometimes uſed.

You aſſert, in conſequence of your ideas of *infinite* ſin, that *every* offence againſt God demerits infinite puniſhment. If the caſe be ſo, does it not tend entirely to take away the diſtinction which God hath made between ſins of infirmity and ſins of malice, ſins of ignorance and ſins of wilfulneſs, leſſer and greater ſins? All ſins are offences againſt God, and if *every* offence againſt God is of *infinite magnitude*, how can any be greater? and thus the diſtinctions are entirely deſtroyed, and, all ſins will be eſteemed equal, contrary to the whole tenor of the Scriptures.

If every offence againſt God demerits infinite puniſhment, then it will follow, that God cannot render to any according to their ways, nor puniſh them as their iniquities deſerve, unleſs they are doomed to *endleſs miſery*; what then will become of all thoſe threatenings where God threatens to puniſh people for all their iniquities, and yet to ſhew favour to them afterwards? This is impoſſible upon your plan, for none can ever receive all the puniſhment due to their ſins during numberleſs ages. Yet if the word of God be true, he can deal with tranſgreſſors as they have done, and yet be gracious to them afterwards. "For thus "ſaith Adonai JEHOVAH, I will even deal with "thee as thou haſt done, which haſt deſpiſed the "oath in breaking the covenant. Nevertheleſs, I "will remember my covenant with thee in the "days of thy youth, and I will eſtabliſh unto "thee an everlaſting covenant.—That thou mayeſt "remember and be confounded, and never open

" thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, " when I am pacified towards thee for all that " thou haſt done, ſaith Adonai JEHOVAH," Ezek. xvi. 59, 60, 63.

Here is an inſtance to the purpoſe, of thoſe whoſe ſins were of the deepeſt die, and to whom God threatens to deal as they had done, and to puniſh them for all their numerous and aggravated tranſgreſſions, and yet to remember mercy for them afterwards, and to be pacified towards them for all that they had done. All which things would be abſolutely impoſſible, according to your ideas. In many other parts of Scripture God promiſes to render to tranſgreſſors according to their works and ways, and yet to be afterwards gracious unto them. And in one place, at leaſt, where God is declaring the great mercies which he will manifeſt unto the children of Iſrael, in returning them to their own land, and cauſing them to dwell ſafely therein, he ſays, " And firſt, " I will recompenſe their iniquity, and their ſin " *double:* becauſe they have defiled my land, they " have filled mine ineritance with the carcaſes of " their deteſtable and abominable things," Jer. xvi. 18. What do you think of this? If every offence is of infinite magnitude, and deſerves infinite puniſhment, which can never be fully executed, then how can God puniſh a people for *all* their iniquities, and *do* to the greateſt ſinners *as* they have *done*, yea, and recompence their iniquity, and their ſin *double* firſt, and then be gracious to them, and love them, and be pacified towards them afterwards? And the prophet Iſaiah ſays, " Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, ſaith " your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem, " and cry unto her, that her warfare is accom- " pliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned; for ſhe " hath received of the LORD's hand DOUBLE FOR

" ALL

" ALL HER SINS," Iſai. xl. 1, 2. Here a fact is ſaid to be accompliſhed, which upon your ſcheme can never be done to all *eternity*; for if every offence againſt God is of infinite magnitude, and deſerves infinite puniſhment, none can ever have received *ſingle* for *one* of their *ſins*, far leſs DOUBLE for ALL.

And therefore nothing can poſſibly be more evidently contrary to Scripture than your trite and common argument, that as, every ſin is of infinite magnitude, ſo it juſtly demerits infinite puniſhment, which as no mere creature can bear, muſt neceſſarily ſubject all who are recompenſed according to their own doings to *endleſs* miſery.

Beſides, If I was to grant you, contrary to Scripture, reaſon, and common ſenſe, that every offence is of infinite magnitude, and naturally deſerves infinite puniſhment: How would you prove from *that* the certainty of *endleſs miſery?* Do you make nothing of the reconciliation which our Lord Jeſus has made for *all ſinners*, and for *all ſins?*

Let me aſk you ſeriouſly, Did not Chriſt make a full and complete offering and propitiation for the ſins of the whole world? Is it not certain that his merits were far greater than the demerits of all mankind? Is he not the Lamb of God, who taketh away the ſin of the world? If Chriſt died for all men, without exception, as you grant, and removed all their iniquities, and bore them away, and reconciled all to God by his death while they were enemies: much more as he has paid ſo great a price for their ranſom, he will recover them out of their loſt eſtate, and ſave them by his life. " Where ſin abounded, grace did (or ſhall) much " more abound. That as ſin hath reigned unto " death, even ſo might grace reign through " righteouſneſs unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt " our Lord," Rom. v. 20. 21.

I conclude, that let ſin be ever ſo great, the

grace of God is greater: and if you will have it that ſin is of *infinite magnitude*, I hope you will not deny the propitiation of Jeſus Chriſt, which he made for all ſins, the ſame character. Therefore if you magnify ſin, and inſiſt upon the greatneſs of its demerit, I will endeavour to magnify the all powerful Redeemer above it, and ſpeak of his power to redeem all the human race, for whom he ſhed his blood. And then you will gain nothing in favour of the doctrine of endleſs damnation, by all your arguments founded upon the *infinity* of ſin: Chriſt being far more infinite to ſave, than ſin can be to deſtroy: and as he has undertaken to redeem and bring back thoſe who were loſt, there is no danger of his failing to perform it.

Friend. I muſt confeſs that what you have ſaid on this head entirely convinces me, that we cannot found the *eternity* of puniſhment, upon the *infinity* of ſin; and you have given me more ſatisfaction upon many points in theſe converſations than I ever expected to receive. I am indeed at length almoſt perſuaded to receive your ſentiments, though I once thought that it was impoſſible to anſwer all my objections, yet you have gone far towards it. Nay, I cannot at preſent recollect any thing material, but what you have anſwered. I would not however be too haſty in adopting this ſyſtem, but after your own example conſider it well. But there is certainly ſomething more grand, beautiful, and harmonious in this view than can be found in any other ſcheme; for both the other ſyſtems end in darkneſs and black night, one in *endleſs damnation*, and the other in *gloomy annihilation*. But on your plan, light riſes out of obſcurity, and a glorious day ſucceeds the darkeſt ſcenes. This view of things ſets the Book of divine Revelation in the moſt pleaſing light, and

and appears, for aught any thing that I can ſee, conſiſtent with the Divine perfections. But why, ſince you believe the univerſal Reſtoration, do you not mention it more freely and fully, in your public diſcourſes?

Miniſter. On the other hand, ſome aſk me, Why do you ever mention it at all in your ſermons; ſince it is not eſſential to ſalvation to believe it? To them I give theſe anſwers.

1. St. Paul declared to Timothy, that this univerſal Goſpel of God's being the Saviour, or Reſtorer, of all men, but eſpecially of thoſe that believe, was a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation; and that they laboured and ſuffered reproach, becauſe they truſted in God, as the univerſal Saviour. But he was ſo far from being aſhamed of this belief, that he ſaid to Timothy, "Theſe things command and teach," 1 Tim. iv. 9, 10, 11. And ſo am I determined to do, at proper opportunies; notwithſtanding the reproach and contempt awaiting me for ſo doing.

2. Though it is frequently ſaid to be a matter of little or no conſequence, if true; yet, if it be any part of the record God hath given of his Son, (as I think I have proved) we are in danger of making him a liar, if we believe it not: See 1 John, v. 9, 10, 11.

3. Though you may be Chriſtians, and not believe it; yet I cannot; though once I could alſo: But now the evidences of its truth appear ſo plain to my mind, that it would be criminal in me not to believe it: and ſince I do believe it, would it not be highly diſhoneſt in me to deny it? I have never done ſo yet, when aſked; and God forbid, that I ſhould be aſhamed to publiſh, what he has commanded to be made known.

4. I have commonly acted merely on the defenſive and I never ſhould, that I know of, have preached it

it in public, or but rarely, far leſs have written upon the ſubject, had it not been repreſented as a dangerous and deſtructive hereſy; and people been cautioned againſt hearing me, on that account.

5. I have been frequently deſired to preach upon the ſubject, expreſſly; and could not well refuſe, without betraying a cowardly diſpoſition.

6. I aſk, Who is the beſt man; he who preaches the truth contrary to his judgment, for intereſt, or to gain applauſe; or he that fairly ſpeaks as he thinks, without diſguiſe; although he knows that it will diſpleaſe his beſt friends on earth; even upon the ſuppoſition that he errs, in many points? If there be an heretic in the world, it is the man, who, for the love of money or applauſe, or through the fear of man, preaches that to others which he himſelf doth not believe. "He that is ſuch, is "ſubverted, and ſinneth; being condemned of "himſelf," Tit. iii. 11.

7. If we are to hold forth nothing to mankind, but what all are agreed in, we muſt diſcourſe upon very few ſubjects: for I do not recollect ſo much as one, but what people either diſagree about the thing itſelf, or the manner of explaining and holding it: No! not even the being and perfections of God; nor any point of doctrinal, experimental, or even practical religion.

8. We are to endeavour to teach mankind what they know not, as well as to confirm them in what they are already taught; ſhould keep back nothing that may be profitable to them; ſhould give meat to ſtrong men, as well as milk to babes; and ſhould not ſhun to declare the *whole* counſel of God. We ought to juſtify the ways of God to men, to ſhew the neceſſity and harmony of Divine Revelation, and take pains to convert infidels; all which things are more promoted by this view than any other.

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As to your queſtion, why I do not dwell more upon it? I anſwer:

1. There are a thouſand other ſubjects in the Bible, beſides this; and all deſerve conſideration, according to their weight and importance.

2. I have an utter averſion to going always in the ſame round of matter or manner; and, therefore I frequently vary in both.

3. There are many other ſubjects of more preſent importance than the belief of this; ſuch as, repentance, faith, hope, love, obedience, &c. and therefore ought to be more frequently inſiſted on, in proportion to their preſent uſe.

4. There are many ſcenes of providence and grace to take place in the univerſe, before the general Reſtoration; ſuch as the Millenium, the calling of the Jews, the univerſal ſpread of the goſpel through the earth, &c. Theſe things are much nearer, and therefore the Scripture ſpeaks more of them; and what God moſt ſpeaks of, in his word, we ſhould diſcourſe of moſt to the people.

5. This doctrine, though it may have its uſe in converting men; and certainly enables thoſe who believe it, to ſet forth the terrors of the Lord, and his mercies, in a more ſtriking manner than otherwiſe they could; yet it is chiefly uſeful in comforting the people of God, and, in part, relieving them from that bitter anguiſh which their tender minds feel, from the conſideration of the vaſt numbers that periſh; and, therefore, may not be ſo proper for a popular audience as many other ſubjects.

6. The plan of this grand Reſtoration is ſo vaſt, includes ſo many different and ſeemingly contradictory diſpenſations, that it cannot be fairly ſtated, and fully defended, in one ſermon, and eſpecially the objections anſwered; and many perſons are not capable of taking in and digeſting

ing at once, ſo many ſubjects as are neceſſary to the underſtanding of this matter, and have not patience to attend to a long ſeries of demonſtrations, arguments, and proofs; and, therefore, this doctrine ſhould not be introduced by any man, in any place, unleſs he has opportunity to give it a fair inveſtigation; and, therefore, I never mention it at all, at my firſt preaching in any place; nor unleſs I have ſufficient opportunities to diſcuſs it.

7. *Chriſt* ſays to his diſciples—"I have yet ma-"ny things to ſay unto you; but ye cannot bear "them now," St. John, xvi. 12. And St. Paul ſays—"And I, brethren, could not ſpeak unto "you as unto ſpiritual, but as unto carnal; even "as unto babes in *Chriſt:* I have fed you with "milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were "not able to bear it; neither yet now are ye able," 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2. "Strong meat belongeth to them "that are of full age; even thoſe who, by reaſon "of uſe, have their ſenſes exerciſed, to diſcern "both good and evil," Heb. v. 14. Therefore, as the Saviour and his apoſtles adapted their ſubjects and diſcourſes to the circumſtances of their hearers, and treated them in a gentle manner; ſo ſhould we. Prudence, patience, and care, ſhould always be uſed in diſcourſing on a doctrine ſo deep and awful as this; and, eſpecially, as it hath been ſo little known of late ages.

8. I would with to eſtabliſh well the firſt principles of Chriſtianity, before I meddle with any thing elſe: and as to the doctrine of the Reſtoration, I would rather that it ſhould ſeem to be naturally inferred from truths already known, than delivered as an independent ſyſtem: I, therefore, ſeldom or ever make it a leading point in my diſcourſes; but ſometimes lead to it, as a natural conſequence of what has been ſaid. After all, I would chuſe that men ſhould diſcover it themſelves,

ſelves, by carefully reading the Scriptures, without prejudice, believing them to be ſtrictly true; by living in love towards God and man; by walking in humility, often reflecting on their former eſtate; and conſtantly viewing the ſufficiency of *Chriſt*, and the boundleſs love of their great Creator: rather than to learn it of any man, far leſs ſtill, of ſuch an unworthy worm as I am.

9. As far as I know my own heart, truth, in love, is my conſtant aim. I am unconnected with any party; and am not ſo prejudiced in favour of any thing that I hold, but that I would willingly be convinced in any thing, by proper evidence; and when ſo convinced, I am ready to retract publicly; As, therefore, I do not feel myſelf perſonally intereſted to ſupport the ſyſtem, right or wrong; I have, therefore, dwelt much leſs upon it, than moſt preachers do upon their particular ſentiments.

10. When I firſt embraced theſe views, I was obliged to give ſome account of my reaſons; and I choſe rather to do it by writing than preaching: Accordingly, I publiſhed my ſentiments, and anſwers to many objections; which publications being in the hands of thoſe to whom I preached, made it leſs neceſſary for me to diſcourſe upon thoſe matters in public, or even in private, as I could refer to what I had written: and with the ſame view, I am inclined to publiſh theſe familiar diſcourſes, which we have had together; after which it will be leſs neceſſary than ever for me to preach the Reſtoration publicly; yet, I will not wholly avoid it, at convenient times, and in proper circumſtances.

11. Laſtly, as I know ſo much of the nature of man, as to be ſenſible that he turns, with diſguſt and loathing, from what is perpetually crammed down his throat; but reliſhes that which he falls

upon, as it were accidentally, and comes into by little and little: I have always made it a rule never to introduce it, in public or private, unleſs where it was earneſtly deſired, nor ever to continue it long together; and, above all, never to queſtion people upon the ſubject, after diſcourſing upon it: aſking them, ſaying, Do you believe it? &c. Nor would I ever wiſh to preſs them with the arguments at once, and oblige them immediately to yield; as this kind of conduct, ſo far from anſwering any good purpoſes, commonly ſets them againſt what is thus intruded upon them. It is the beſt way to give time and leiſure to perſons, whom you would wiſh to convince; and let them exerciſe their own faculties.

Friend. I muſt confeſs that what you have advanced is highly ſatisfactory to me, and I truſt will be ſo to many others, who may read theſe converſations, which I hope to have the pleaſure of ſeeing in print before long; and in the mean time, I wiſh for a bleſſing to attend your labours, and that you may be an inſtrument of much good to mankind in your day and generation, and that you may obtain a crown of life from the Lord the righteous Judge, in the day of his appearing.

Miniſter. I thank you moſt kindly for your benevolent wiſhes, I heartily wiſh the ſame bleſſing may come to yourſelf. And if I have been an inſtrument of giving you any ſatisfaction, let all the glory be to God, but let me have an intereſt in your prayers.

FINIS.

PROPOSALS

FOR PRINTING BY SUBSCRIPTION,

THE

Proceſs and Empire of Chriſt,

A POEM,

BY ELHANAN WINCHESTER,

Several Books of which have appeared in the PHILADELPHIAN MAGAZINE.

CONDITIONS.

1. This Poem will be publiſhed in one handſome Volume octavo, containing about four hundred pages, or twenty-five ſheets.
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4. As ſoon as two hundred and fifty copies are ſubſcribed for, the work will be put to preſs, and finiſhed with all convenient expedition.
5. The names of the Subſcribers will be printed.

Subſcriptions will be received at the Chapel in Glaſs-houſe Yard, and by the Author, at his houſe, No. 5, Winkworth's Buildings, City Road.

The following is the plan of the Poem, and is ſubmitted to the Public, as a ſpecimen of the work, and the manner of its execution.

PLAN

PLAN

OF AN

HEROIC POEM,

CALLED, THE

Proceſs and Empire of Chriſt,

FROM HIS BIRTH, TO THE TIME WHEN HE SHALL HAVE DELIVERED UP THE KINGDOM TO GOD, EVEN THE FATHER.

WHILE others ſing the Monarchs of the globe,
Their feats in war, their courage, ſtrength, and ſkill,
I ſing the riſing Empire of my Lord;
The Kingdom of the Babe in Bethlehem born:
Whoſe birth was ſung by angels, and foretold
By prophets, who partook of heav'nly fire.
Tremendous theme indeed! auguſt! immenſe!
But God can teach the humbleſt mind to ſoar;
Can ſend proſperity to one like me,
Unſkill'd in epic muſe, and teach my pen
To paint Meſſiah's triumphs o'er his foes;
The glories of his peaceful reign deſcribe.
Can lead my thoughts his Proceſs to purſue,
From heav'n's bright court down to this lower world,
And through the various labours of his life,
And the dire ſcene of ſuff'rings which he bore,
The Scriptures to fulfil, and men to ſave:

Then

Then to thy gloomy regions, tyrant Death,
And through the gates and bars of hell's domain,
To preach the goſpel to the pris'ners there,
Taking the mighty's captives for his ſpoil;
Thus ſpoiling principalities and pow'rs.
Then crown'd with wreaths of vict'ry fairly won,
Immortal garland! laurels richly earn'd!
He roſe triumphant over death and hell,
And lives for ever, holds the keys of both:
And was declar'd the Son of God with pow'r.
From earth he did aſcend to higheſt heav'ns,
Having deſcended firſt to worlds beneath.
Enthron'd above he ſits at God's right hand,
And makes perpetual interceſſion there,
Till that great day, long waited for, ſhall come,
When he with glory crown'd, and cloath'd with zeal,
Shall to the earth deſcend, deſtroy his foes.
Then Jacob's tribes returned to their land,
Shall own him Lord and King, on David's throne.
Then Satan bound, in the abyſs confin'd,
Shall vex the ſaints no more, no more deceive
The nations of the earth, until fulfill'd
Shall be the period of a thouſand years.
Then the ſev'nth angel ſhall his trumpet ſound,
And ev'ry kingdom ſhall become the Lord's:
The nations that refuſe ſhall be deſtroy'd.
Jeſus ſhall judge all nations, and ſhall rule
All people by the laws of righteouſneſs;
Shall take the curſe from earth, and bleſs mankind
With greater bleſſings than their father loſt.

That

That age (ſurpaſſing far the golden age
Which ancient poets feign'd in days of Yore)
Approaches faſt, and ſhall ere long arrive,
When the Meſſiah, for a thouſand years,
Shall wield in peace the ſceptre of the world;
And his beloved ſaints with him ſhall reign,
Upon his throne, as royal prieſts and kings.
Throughout thoſe halcyon days no wars ſhall riſe,
No earthquakes roar, nor famine, plague, or ſtorm
Shall deſolate the earth; no child ſhall die
In the firſt ſtage of life. All deadly hate
Shall ceaſe among the globe's inhabitants;
Man ſhall not vex his neighbour, nor the beaſts
Make war upon each other, leſs on man;
All ſhall be love, and peace, and harmony.
Man to longevity again reſtor'd,
Shall ſee his ſeed for ages unimpair'd;
And ſhall enjoy the labour of his hands:
And all ſhall know and worſhip God the LORD,
But farther; God can ſo direct my mind,
That I ſhall ſing, what never poet ſang;
The Prince of Darkneſs loos'd, once more ſet free
A little ſeaſon, to deceive mankind.
O dreadful change! but in the wond'rous plan
Of our Creator, infinitely wiſe:
Its uſe moſt evidently will appear.
Behold, the foe of God and man comes forth,
And leaves his dreary priſon for a time;
That pit where full a thouſand painful years
He ſpent, yet unreform'd, ſtill full of rage:

More

More fierce than ever, he comes forth to war
Againſt the Prince of Peace; who gives him leave
To gather all his hoſt where ever found,
The Gog and Magog to the dreadful fight;
Where once for all, it ſhall determin'd be
(And that by force of arms and conqueſt ſure)
To whom the kingdom doth of right belong.
Then Satan with his mighty hoſt o'erthrown,
And juſtly ſentenc'd to the burning lake,
The laſt reſort of evil, woe and pain;
Shall never hope to gain the vict'ry more.

From that amazing ſcene, I'll paſs to tell
Thoſe greater themes, unſung in epic ſtrains,
The renovation of the heav'n and earth,
After the conflagration of the world,
And the laſt judgment paſs'd on ſinful men.
The globe how chang'd! the ſea exiſts no more!
In earth renew'd pure righteouſneſs will dwell;
The King of righteouſneſs, with all his ſaints.
The heav'nly city ſhall deſcend from God,
Built, and adorn'd, by his almighty hand;
A cube; in length and breadth and height the ſame;
Twelve thouſand furlongs; fifteen hundred miles:
Sufficient to contain the human race;
And yet, if poſſible, more rich than great.
Its wall, is jaſper, and its floor is gold;
Its gates, ſo wide and high, are ſev'ral pearls;
Its grand foundations are of precious ſtones:
God and the Lamb its glory, temple, light.
The city ſhines with pure celeſtial rays;

As

As jaſper precious, and as cryſtal clear:
The nations of the ſav'd ſhall walk therein.
Then will I ſing, if God ſhall give me leave,
Thoſe glorious periods, far remote from view;
Thoſe ages of the Mediator's reign,
Which ſhall not end till all things are ſubdu'd,
Redeem'd, reheaded, reconcil'd, reſtor'd!
And not one enemy to God is found
Through all the regions of the univerſe:
For ev'ry knee ſhall bow, and tongue ſhall ſwear.
Sin, ſorrow, pain and death ſhall be deſtroy'd;
And ev'ry creature through God's wide domain,
Shall own the glorious JESUS, Lord and King.
Then Chriſt as Mediator, will reſign
The kingdom up; and God be ALL IN ALL.
As God, his kingdom cannot have an end,
But muſt endure to all eternity;
Yet when his vaſt deſigns are all fulfill'd
For which he acts the Mediator's part,
And when rebellion ſhall no more exiſt,
That character no longer he'll ſuſtain.
  Theſe are the grandeſt ſcenes that can be ſung;
But O what mortal dares attempt the taſk?
Shall I, who never gain'd *Parnaſſian* heights,
Nor bath'd in *Helicon*'s harmonious ſpring,
On whom the ſtars propitious never ſmil'd,
And whom the muſes never deign'd to bleſs
With their poetic fire—ſhall I attempt
A theme ſo lofty, and a ſong ſo grand?
But help me, God of nature, God of grace,

Or

Or here I ſtop; and can no farther go.
The pow'r is thine, and if thou wilt employ
My weak unletter'd pen, and grand ſucceſs
To my endeavours, and enable me
To write in ſuch a manner as may pleaſe
Not men alone; but thee, the Judge of all;
Then this production, howſoever weak,
Shall ſtand a witneſs of thy love to man,
And of my love to thee, my Saviour dear.
Be this my happineſs, inſpir'd by thee,
Thy Proceſs, and thy glorious Reign to Sing.
My truſt is in thy name, thy Spirit's aid
Is all I aſk, theſe wonders to unfold.

A few ſets of the Lectures on the Prophecies that remain to be Fulfilled, in four vols. 8vo. may be had of the AUTHOR, No. 5, Winkworth's Buildings, City-Road, and of Mr. Parſons, No. 21, Paternoſter Row; Price One Guinea in boards, or One Pound Eight Shillings, elegantly bound and lettered.

Theſe Lectures have been well received both in England and America, and have been the means of giving ſatisfaction to many enquiring minds, and have reclaimed ſeveral, who have heard or read them, from infidelity, and have confirmed others who were wavering.

The following letters from the learned and ingenious Dr. BENJAMIN RUSH, of Philadelphia, to the AUTHOR, containing his ſentiments upon the Lectures, &c. are ſubjoined at the earneſt requeſt of ſome valuable friends.

Philadelphia, May 11th, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

I SIT down with great pleaſure to thank you for the inſtruction I have derived from reading your Lectures on the Prophecies.

You have made the Old and New Teſtaments intelligible books, and added greatly to our obligations to love and admire them.

To pry into the meaning of prophecies is certainly a *duty*. Our Saviour condemns his disciples for being slow of heart in believing all that the Scriptures have said concerning him; and commends Abraham for beholding his day afar off, and rejoicing in the great events which were to follow it.

Perhaps a great part of the errors in principle, and lukewarmness in practice of all sects of Christians, arise chiefly from their ignorance of the literal meaning and extent of the prophecies which relate to the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Go on, my dear Sir, in your researches. As the best natural philosophers are those who examine the works of nature most minutely; so they are the best divines who search and compare the Scriptures most carefully. Your works are beyond the present state of knowledge in our world, but the time *must* come, when they will rise into universal estimation, and bear down all the modern systems of our schools. They are founded on a rock, and the more reason and religion prevail in the world, the more their beauty, symmetry and sublimity will be seen and admired.

He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, we are all alike prone to Jewish infidelity. We condemn the Jews for looking for a temporal deliverer when our Saviour came into the world. We act their folly over again in looking for a (mere) spiritual instead of a temporal kingdom in the Millenium.

The Universal doctrine prevails more and more in our country, particularly among persons eminent for their piety, in whom it is not a mere speculation, but a new principle of action in the heart, prompting to practical godliness.

Your native country is rising daily in industry, order, and in every thing else that can constitute national happiness. The present wise and just administration of our government refutes all that can be said in Europe in favour of the necessity or advantages of Monarchy or Aristocracy.

Your account of the Restoration of Sacrifices *after* the coming of our Saviour, is the only part of your Lectures that I object to. I suspect they ought to have been placed a short time *before* the commencement of his personal government.

Perhaps you may re-consider this subject in the next edition of them.

Adieu, from, Dear Sir, your's sincerely,
BENJAMIN RUSH.

Philadelphia, November 12, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

ACCEPT of my thanks for your long letter by the Pigou, and the valuable Publications which accompanied it. Your letters to Mr. Taylor contain many new and striking ideas. Your Funeral Sermon upon Mr. Wesley does honour to the philanthropy

lanthropy of your universal principles. I admire and honour that great man above any man that has lived since the time of the Apostles. His writings will ere long revive in support of our doctrine—for if Christ died for *all*, as Mr. Wesley always taught, it will soon appear a necessary consequence that *all* shall be saved.—But what shall I say to the fourth volume of your Lectures on the Prophecies?—Accept of my thanks over and over, for the instruction and entertainment I have derived from reading them. They are now in the hands of my dear friend and old preceptor in medicine, Dr. Redman, who speaks in the highest terms of them, and calls you our THEOLOGICAL NEWTON.—Go on, my dear Sir, with your researches into the true meaning of the Scriptures. Your works, however much neglected or opposed now, will be precious to those generations which are to follow us, and like the bones of Elisha, will perform miracles after your death. How delightful to a good man should be the thoughts of surviving himself! and of being useful to more than one or two generations!—The persons who are to exist an hundred years hence are as much our fellow-creatures as those who are our contemporaries. It only requires more grace to love them than the persons whom we see and converse with every day; but in proportion as we attain to this sublime act of love, we approach nearer to the source of all love—for he loves, and serves all the generations of his creatures with an equal affection.

I contemplate with you, the progress of reason and liberty in Europe with great pleasure.—Republican forms of government are the best repositories of the gospel: I therefore suppose they are intended as preludes to a glorious manifestation of its power and influence upon the hearts of men. The language of those free and equal governments seems to be like that of John the Baptist of old, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord—make his paths strait."—The benevolent spirit which has lately appeared in the world in its governments—in numerous philanthropic and humane societies—and even in public entertainments, remind me of the first efforts of a child to move its body or limbs. These efforts are strong, but irregular, and often in a contrary direction to that which is intended. Time, and a few unsuccessful experiments soon bring those motions into a proper direction. The same will happen, I have no doubt, to the present kind, but irregular and convulsive impulses of the human heart. At present they tend wholly towards the *creature*, but they cannot rest long there—they must rise to the CREATOR. At present they lead men to admire and celebrate human lights, and human deliverers, such as Voltaire, Rousseau, Price, Priestly, Franklin, Fayette, and Washington—but ere long public admiration and praise will rise to him who is the true Light of the world, and who delivers from evils of *every kind*. At present we wish "liberty to the whole world."—But the next touch of the celestial magnet upon the human heart will direct it into wishes for the *Salvation of all Mankind*.

BENJAMIN RUSH.

A List

A List of such of Mr. WINCHESTER's Works as are published in England, and may be had of him at his House, No. 5, Winkworth's Buildings, City Road; and of Mr. Parsons, No. 21, Paternoster-Row.

	£.	s.	d.
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